

# FIGHT RACISM! FIGHT IMPERIALISM!

Anti-imperialist paper of the Revolutionary Communist Group

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## GREENHAM TRIUMPHANT

On Sunday 11 December tens of thousands of women gathered at Greenham Common peace camp to commemorate the first anniversary of the women's encirclement of the base. Spirits and energy soared as on the hour, every hour, everyone made as much noise as possible. Women played musical instruments, banged saucepan lids, tins and trays and blew whistles and made piercing warning cries. Thousands of mirrors and tin foil were used as a symbol to reflect evil back into the base.

On the other side of the fence, behind bales of barbed wire, soldiers patrolled with dogs, whilst helicopters swooped low, filming demonstrators, shining search lights on them and trying to intimidate and disrupt the action. Meanwhile mounted police deliberately swerved their horses into the crowd forcing people to move for fear of being trampled.

From about 3.00pm women started to angrily shake and cut down the fence. In response, police moved in striking and dragging women off the fence. Some women were punched in the face, others had their fingers broken as they clutched the fence; many were brutally hit with iron bars and one woman was picked up and hurled onto the barbed wire. Over 60 women were arrested with further arrests next morning as they again tried to enter the base. At least five women have been refused bail and are being held in Holloway Prison.

We went down to show solidarity from FRFI with the struggle of the Greenham women. We spent a lot of time talking to women and sold 120 FRFI in 2 hours! Many women were attracted by the anti-imperialist struggles covered in the paper, especially the articles on the US invasion of Grenada and the achievements of revolutionary Nicaragua.

Recent disclosures of racist, sexist, drunken British police are being matched by the reports of drug and alcohol abuses in the US marines army and navy. 24 per cent of US marines, 38% of the US army and 42% of the US navy admitted taking marijuana on duty. Of the soldiers who have been vetted to service and guard nuclear weapons, 5,000 have to be removed from this duty every year as a result of these abuses. These are the very soldiers who have the power to shoot peace protestors who enter the base.

As the struggle intensifies at Greenham, women are experiencing increasing British state repression and brutality and are identifying more and more with revolutionary forces all over the world to be rid of bloodthirsty imperialist war and oppression.

If you want peace fight imperialism!  
Victory to the Greenham women!  
Ruby and Alexa



## Greenham/Warrington

# STATE VIOLENCE



## HARD LESSONS OF NGA DISPUTE

Yet again a trade union struggle has first been crippled and finally destroyed by the trade union leadership and the TUC. The Stockport Messenger dispute (the paper is printed in Warrington) was irretrievably lost by the National Graphical Association (NGA) leadership when they suspended the one-day national print strike called for 14 December and made all future militant action in relation to the dispute dependent on TUC support. The decision of the TUC General Council by a vote of 29-21 not to back the position taken on Monday 12 December by its Employment Policy and Organisation Committee of a 'sympathetic and supportive attitude' to the NGA's action against the Stockport Messenger Group, signalled the end of any further serious campaigning around the dispute. The TUC General Council made it clear that its support for the NGA, and therefore its opposition to the Tory anti-union laws, would be restricted to action within those laws.

continued on page 2

**RACISTS IN BLUE**  
Report on London's police page 5

## LEBANON

## Imperialists get entrenched

A terrible constellation of reactionary forces now threatens the anti-imperialist movement in the Middle East. At its centre is the USA and Israel whose recently concluded agreement according to the *Observer* gives Israel 'unprecedented financial, commercial, military and political concessions'. A joint military political group is to be formed for greater strategic co-operation against 'the threat to our mutual interests'. The US will resume the supply of cluster bombs to Israel and provide it with all the military hardware it asks for as well as over \$400m for the production of Lavi fighter planes. Despite all their disputes, US imperialism has again confirmed Israel's role as the sole trusted and reliable executor of imperialist ambitions in the region.

The most immediate aim of these partners in reaction and butchery - remember Beirut 1982 with 25,000 dead, Sabra-Chatilla and the countless crimes in occupied South Lebanon and the West Bank - is to force a Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon without a simultaneous

Israeli withdrawal from the South. Hours after the agreement Israeli jets struck Druze positions in the Shouf mountains and days later the US launched its biggest air-raids since the Vietnam war against Syrian positions. US diplomats visiting Syria will threaten

continued on page 12

## STATEMENT

On Saturday 17 December an IRA car bomb exploded outside Harrods, killing 5 people and injuring over 90. Predictably British police, politicians and media are whipping up a storm of anti-Irish hysteria and shedding crocodile tears about civilian casualties. From the British ruling class which has never hesitated to slaughter Irish civilians, this is nothing but hypocrisy.

Reports so far show that despite a 37 minute warning (which according to the press included the exact registration number of the car) the police made no attempt to evacuate the streets around Harrods. This undoubtedly contributed to the high level of civilian casualties. Throughout the previous week the police and press were issuing repeated warnings of 'an IRA Christmas bombing campaign' and several evacuations were carried out. So why was there no

evacuation in this case?

Predictably, Labour politicians have joined the ruling class chorus of denunciation. They have little to say about British imperialist barbarity against the Irish: Bloody Sunday - 14 civilians killed; plastic bullets - 14 civilians killed including 7 children; shoot-to-kill - 15 killed in the last year; and countless other crimes against the Irish people.

As FRFI has repeatedly said the deaths, injuries and tragedies resulting from such actions are directly the responsibility of British imperialism and all those who have condoned continued British imperialist rule in Ireland.

As we go to press these events, and others in Ireland, are being used by politicians, the press and the media, to demand a ban on Sinn Fein. All readers should condemn any such attempt.

## Sectarian attacks and murders

On 20 November, 3 people were shot dead whilst attending a service at the Mountain Lodge Gospel Hall in South Armagh. The shootings, which were claimed by a body calling itself the 'Catholic Reaction Force', brought forth a wave of outrage from Loyalist and British politicians and were front page news in the British press. Loyalist politicians immediately used the attacks as a pretext for demanding greater repression against the nationalist population. The Official Unionists backed up this demand by withdrawing from James Prior's collapsing Assembly.

The hypocrisy of all this was clear to the nationalist people of the Six Counties who have suffered scores of sectarian attacks and murders over the past years.

As *An Phoblacht/Republican News* put it:

'...sectarian murder has been the weapon of the loyalists seeking to

continued on page 16

## INSIDE

The NGA Dispute	2
Apartheid Terror Against the Frontline States	3
Racists in Blue, Cyrus Noor Imprisoned	4&5
Notes and Comments, Police File	6
Grenada, Central America	7
British Imperialism: Parasitic and Decaying Capitalism	8&9
Reviews	10
Brazil, Arms Race	11
Prisoners Fightback	12
Sinn Fein Ard Fheils	13
Round-up, Events, Letters	14 & 15
Smash the Show Trials	16



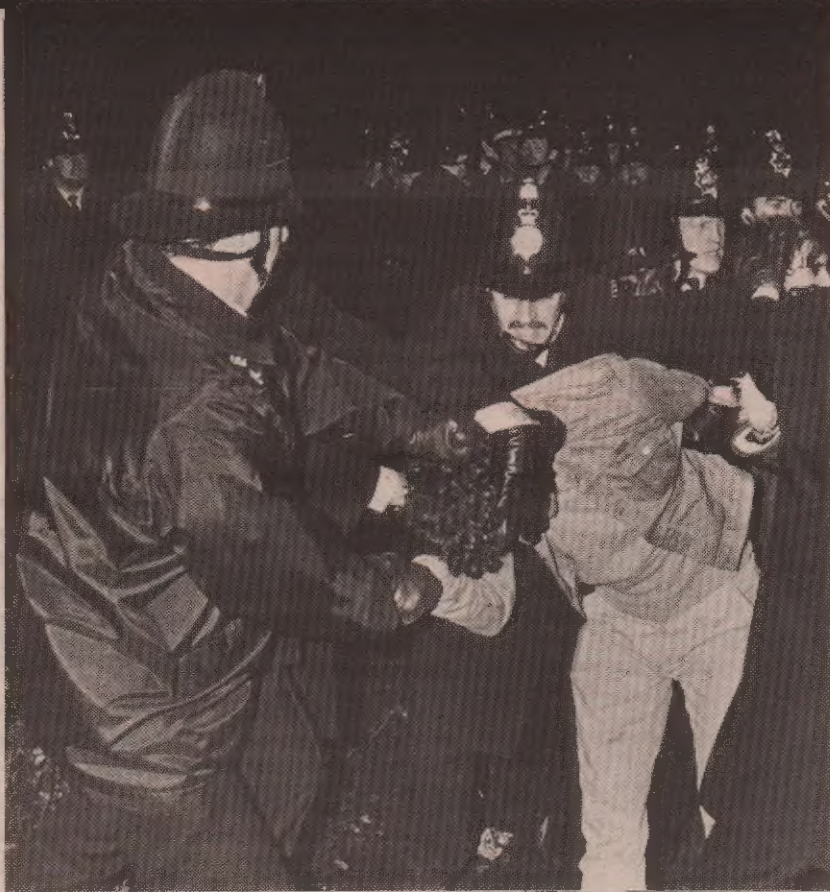
## EDITORIAL

# Hard lessons of NGA dispute

continued from page 1

It is important to understand what this means. The Tory anti-union laws represent the most serious attack on trade union rights for 80 years. If complied with they destroy any real possibility of an effective defence of workers' jobs, pay and conditions against determined employers. Today a defence of basic trade union rights, as the Stockport *Messenger* dispute has demonstrated, brings trade unions into conflict with the law and is inevitably a direct fight against the state, its police and its courts. Those who refuse to act on the basis of this obvious fact take the side of the ruling class and will inevitably lead trade unionists into defeat after defeat.

The Stockport *Messenger* dispute is principally about the closed-shop—more specifically the pre-entry closed shop operated by the NGA to ensure work with high wages and good conditions for its members. The pre-entry closed shop operates on the basis that the work requires certain skills which only NGA members possess. It is designed to prevent the de-skilling of printing, and the consequent lowering of wages and conditions. The problem is that with the introduction of new technology, the skills of printers and typesetters are less and less required. The Stockport *Messenger* dispute is taking place against this



## Extract from FRFI supporter's eye witness report from Warrington Picket line on 29 November

The comrade with the megaphone wasn't having a lot of impact. Less than half the people were actually in the picket. Only those near the front were linking arms. Too many were on the hill or at the back watching. At about 3.50 the police line broke and the TAG came steaming out, waving their batons. Everyone scattered. Pickets were batoned to the ground. Some were dragged off and arrested. The crowd ran about 50 metres before stopping. The TAG line was re-formed and the police came in behind. Now they controlled the T junction. There was quite a lot of shouting now and people began throwing stones. A second surge and they occupied the last hill behind. Another set of TAG aimed their running attack at the sides and created terror. All were by now on the retreat. Pickets started to light fires further back but they had nothing to counteract the TAG and their batons and crash helmets. Three such surges with consolidations followed. The pickets were in total disarray and running into the surrounding fields. It was only the small hard core who attempted to erect feeble barricades but the spirit was there. The majority hadn't expected the state to be so heavy handed. There were sporadic fightbacks and some stone throwing. The idea of barricades had come too late. At about five o'clock the dog patrol van came out followed by the Stamford Hire Van with the papers.

# The middle class left and the NGA dispute

Predictably the lessons of the NGA dispute were completely lost on the middle class left. The SWP is a prime example.

For *Socialist Worker* the only place that 'general class politics' 'really matters' is on 'the shop floor'. For this reason they give little prominence to anti-racist and anti-imperialist struggles. Indeed, they criticise national liberation movements, the peace movement and anti-racist struggles for being separate from the organised trade union movement. But, if we examine the facts, the only sustained politically conscious struggles are taking place outside the organised Labour and trade union movement. Every now and again a section of the organised trade union movement is forced into struggle. When this happens we see a real test of the SWP's politics.

'The battle of the Stockport *Messenger* has become a battle over the future of working class organisation' was the message of the front page of *Socialist Worker* (3 December 1983) under the massive headline SOLIDARITY. Two weeks later (17 December 1983) came the inevitable even larger headline BETRAYAL. How often must this happen before the SWP learns anything? 'The treachery of Len Murray and Tony Dubbins', they whined, gave 'the Tories a victory they could not have expected'. But then we read on the next page that Len Murray's actions are 'entirely in character' since he had scabbed on and sabotaged workers' struggle since 1976. So it appears that anyone with any foresight—unlike *Socialist Worker*—would have almost certainly expected it. The Tories certainly did, as their confidence showed throughout.

Between SOLIDARITY and BE-

TRAYAL there was a lot of nonsense in the pages of *Socialist Worker*. Among the more reactionary garbage was the following:

'Some people have been referring to the picket as the Grunwicks of the North, after the scab photo-processing strike of the late 1970s. They forget the Grunwicks strike was defeated.' (3 December 1983)

If the NGA had shown anything like the same determination, steadfastness and courage that the Grunwick workers, and in particular the black women, showed on the picket line over a period of nearly two years, then the NGA dispute might have had a different outcome. The Grunwick picket line, at one time, had one quarter of the Metropolitan Police against it. This did not deter the picketers. They still fought on. They did not attack some of those who came to support them as 'left-wing extremists' who came along for 'a punch-up with the police' as some of the six sacked NGA workers did after the night of police violence on 29 November. The TUC did indeed also betray the Grunwick strikers and they were defeated. But any serious trade unionist would be honoured to be associated with those low-paid workers, and especially the black women, who stood for nearly two years unbowed on the Grunwick picket line fighting for basic trade union rights.

*Socialist Worker*, as this paper has pointed out time and again, does not begin to understand why the organised working class refuses to fight the most

reactionary Tory government since the Second World War. It refuses to recognise that whole sections of the organised working class prefer to hang on to the privileges that come from the jobs they have now rather than fight for the jobs for the future, for the unemployed and less privileged sections of the working class. So *Socialist Worker* has to resort to sociological garbage in a futile effort to explain what is going on. It seems we are now in a 'downturn' but the NGA dispute, at least for a couple of weeks, was 'a sectional upturn in the midst of a general downturn'. Well, if you believe that, you will believe anything. It is simply a cover for ignorance. So is *Socialist Worker's* attempt to explain the failure of the NGA dispute as a lack of 'socialist activists operating at the rank-and-file level' of the NGA. If pigs could fly!

Of a similar character is *Socialist Worker's* attack on the Greenham women for using tactics—vigils, blockades and huge demonstrations—which 'simply don't work'. They contrast this to the NGA dispute where 'we have seen a glimpse of the sort of power which workers can use to take on the Tories.' (10 December 1983). The reality is quite different. The Greenham women, a militant section of the peace movement, have put aside a relatively privileged life in order to fight against nuclear weapons, which they see as endangering the future of the human race. They have been arrested, criminalised and sent to prison for their struggle. But they still fight on. The NGA on the other hand has given up the fight at Warrington precisely because the NGA and TUC refuse to lose all their wealth and assets in the cause of trade union rights. It is precisely because the Greenham women have refused to have the albatross of Len Murray and the trade union movement around their necks that they have had such a dramatic impact on public opinion in Britain.

background of deskilling of the printing industry. Eddie Shah's workers are paid as much as £70 less per week than the NGA members who they replaced.

The dispute centres on a right-wing ex-NGA member, second cousin of the Aga Khan, Gordonstoun educated 'self-made' businessman Eddie Shah and a small right-wing privileged craft union. The so-called 'loner' Eddie Shah has the backing of the Institute of Directors, Tory MPs, the government laws, its police and courts. The NGA, in contrast, was denied even the support of the TUC.

The dispute has developed over a long period. The details are well known. What is not so well known is that during the course of the negotiations the NGA has conceded the following at various points: 50% union membership at Eddie Shah's Bury and Warrington works, post-entry closed shop, and on 17 November Tony Dubbins (General Secretary elect of the NGA) said that the six members sacked for going on strike would be 'taken care of' by the union. Eddie Shah has proved to be a maverick in negotiations. He is said to have agreed to all these points at some stage in the negotiations, but he never comes to an agreement overall.

The escalation of the dispute was due to two factors. First the intransigence of Eddie Shah, leaving the NGA, in spite of all the concessions it is prepared to make, with no choice but to fight. Second, the NGA stands to lose a great deal, even to be destroyed completely, if the closed shop is destroyed because the skills of its members are fast becoming obsolete.

The crucial turning point in the dispute has been the intervention of the courts on the basis of the Tory anti-union laws to prevent effective picketing of the Warrington works. The NGA has been fined nearly £700,000 and its funds have been sequestered. Writs for damages of over £3m have been issued following the two-day stoppage on Fleet Street and there is more to come. The intervention of the courts transformed this dispute from a conflict between a particular union and particular employer into a direct confrontation between trade unionists and the state. After the mass pickets at Warrington and the brutal determined government-directed police attack on the picketers, the NGA showed that it did not have the stomach for such a fight.

Such a fight would have required the NGA to be prepared to put further at risk its considerable assets of over £11m; to organise defence of picketers against police violence, to defy the courts; and for its members to engage in a long and bitter strike, almost certainly without strike pay. In short, the NGA and its members would have had to risk all in defence of workers' rights. This the NGA refused to do. As we have argued before, the British trade unions with their luxurious premises, conference halls, full-time staff, newspapers and massive investments in imperialist banks and multinational firms, are not fighting organisations. Their economic, social and political ties to the capitalist system have rendered them incapable of defending the working class. That is why the NGA leadership covered their inevitable retreat by handing the decision over to the TUC, knowing full well that under no circumstances would the TUC give practical support for such a fight.

The NGA dispute is a taste of what is to come in all major trade union disputes. The treachery of the NGA and TUC leadership will be repeated over and over again. Trade unionists, who will be forced to fight back against the ruling class and its agents in the working class movement, will have to build new organisations capable of carrying out such a struggle.

In doing this they will have to learn the lessons which the most oppressed sections of the working class have already learnt. First that the police are the paid, trained and armed force of the ruling class. The Warrington mass picket, 29 November, showed that the police have learned the lessons of 1981 drawn from their battles with black and white youth in Liverpool 8, Moss Side, Brixton and elsewhere. They attacked the picket in riot formation, wearing visored helmets, wielding batons, kicking and

## in brief

### SOUTH AFRICA

#### ANC attacks

16 December is the anniversary of the formation of Umkhonto We Sizwe and the movement has once again shown its ability to strike at the heart of the regime. On Monday 12 December a bomb severely damaged offices of the regime in the centre of Johannesburg. On 7 December another government department was damaged by a limpet mine, and the next day Umkhonto We Sizwe fighters blasted wagons off a rail line in Bloemfontein. CB

#### We will not be moved – we will die and be buried here

Since 1960, 3½ million black people have been forcibly removed by the apartheid regime from areas they have been living in for generations to the bantustan concentration camps, to die of starvation and disease. The apartheid regime has now announced that Crossroads, the black squatter camp outside Cape Town, will once and for all be destroyed and the people moved to the barren sand dunes of the Cape Flats, 25 miles away. Crossroads has become a symbol of fierce resistance and defiance of the apartheid regime's removal policy. Women, who have been forced to live 'illegally' in the Cape area rather than be separated from their families and starve in the bantustans, are the backbone of the struggle, and have organised to provide for the health and educational needs of their children. Such is the spirit of courage and determination that the apartheid regime will never be able to crush it. As one of them has said 'The Government's dream is a false one if it thinks we will leave the Western Cape. We will not leave. We will die and be buried here.'

Ruby Khan

#### No vote for apartheid

The United Democratic Front, who campaigned vigorously for a boycott of the black community council elections held on 3 December, have scored a major victory. The turn-out in all the twenty-six urban black areas was very poor, and in the biggest black township, Soweto, barely 10% of those eligible to vote voted for the 'new' Soweto town council. The black local government 'representatives' will merely act as stooges to the apartheid regime, and the community councils will not be controlled by the people but by the white authorities.

Ruby Khan

punching picketers. They destroyed the NGA communications van. Police in landrovers chased people and beat them up.

Second that the law, the courts and parliament will be used to prevent any effective resistance. Many trade unionists, as shown by their lack of preparation for police violence at Warrington and their concern for legality, have yet to learn these lessons. A NGA national council member Mr Bill Bush, after stating that demonstrators 'walking around peacefully' had been punched and kicked by the police and that he 'even saw young girls thumped and kicked', naively said 'you don't expect that from the police'. Where has he been?

On the picket it was the unemployed, youth, and students who were most determined in resisting police attacks as shown by the fact that of those arrested only 9 were printers, whereas 13 were unemployed, and 26 were students. Groups of youth built barricades on the approach road to the plant. Unfortunately they were not able to overcome the complete failure of the NGA to anticipate the police violence and organise a defence of the picket.

The Stockport *Messenger* dispute confirms that trade unionists who want to fight will have to break from the reactionary leadership of the organised trade union movement. They cannot rely on constitutional and parliamentary processes to defend their interests. The Labour Party, yet again, refused to back any action not within the law. Trade unionists who are prepared to fight will find their true allies amongst the most oppressed sections of the working class.



# SOUTH AFRICA

## ANGOLA

After 14 years of armed struggle by the MPLA against Portuguese colonialism independence was achieved by the Angolan people on 11 November 1975. On the threshold of independence two organisations simultaneously declared war on the MPLA: Unita, which had a record of compromise and collaboration with the Portuguese imperialists, and the FNLA, a tribally based grouping with backing from the corrupt Mobutu dictatorship in Zaire. The MPLA had the upper hand against these counter revolutionary elements until the South Africa forces invaded on 25 October 1975 and joined the Unita bandits in southern Angola. Meanwhile the Zairean army linked up with the FNLA in the north. This combined operation was intended to seize Angola's capital city of Luanda before the MPLA could declare independence, and was directly backed by the US. In 1975 alone the CIA funded \$30 million for covert operations in Angola, \$14 million of which was channelled to the FNLA and Unita. The MPLA called for external military aid to assist Angola's defence, and in November 1975, after South Africa's invasion had already begun, the first Cuban troops arrived in Angola. The Soviet Union also supplied military equipment. The counter offensive launched by the combined Angolan and internationalist Cuban forces expelled the South African invaders by March 1976. This was a decisive victory. It allowed the Angolan government and people a breathing space to devote their efforts towards national reconstruction and building socialism.

However, since 1976 Angola has had a continuous battle against South African aggression, which has taken the form of bombing raids, violations of Angolan air space, incursions of South African troops, border provocations, infantry attacks, artillery shelling and mine laying. 10,000 people, Angolans and Namibian refugees, have been killed as a result of South African aggression between 1975 and 1982. The most infamous and brutal attack was the massacre at the Namibian refugee camp at Kassinga where 1,315 Namibian refugees, Angolan soldiers and civilians were killed or wounded. Since early 1981 South Africa has stepped up its aggression on Angola, encouraged by the war mongering US government. In August 1981 South Africa invaded and occupied a large

## APARTHEID TERROR AGAINST FRONTLINE STATES

'I'm an African, and I believe communism is bad for Africa. If fellow Africans are threatened by the evils of communism, we shall assist them when our assistance is requested.' P W Botha, apartheid's Prime Minister.

The line taken by Israel in the Middle East and by Reagan in Central America is followed by South Africa in relation to its neighbours — the frontline states. The whole of southern Africa lives under threat from the South African fascists. The apartheid regime uses economic pressure, blackmail and military action in its attempts to bludgeon the frontline states into submission. Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Lesotho all suffer from South Africa's acts of war and destabilisation. The apartheid regime backs bandits in these countries to carry out its acts of terror against the people. In Angola South Africa backs Unita, in Mozambique the Mozambique National Resistance, in Lesotho the Lesotho Liberation Army, and in Zimbabwe groups of counter revolutionaries have admitted to being trained in South Africa. All this is to further the interests of white supremacy and to act as regional policeman for western imperialist nations who want to regain their colonial stranglehold on southern Africa, indeed on Africa as a whole.

part of Cunene province, in culmination of 'Operation Protea' planned by the Pretoria regime with the collusion of the US. The occupation continues. In November 1981 South African troops sabotaged the oil refinery in Luanda, and in 1982 and 1983 South African aggression has intensified.

Throughout this year with the aid of Unita the South African troops have carried out terrorist operations against the people of Angola. On 19 January Lomaum Dam in Benguela province was attacked, seriously effecting power supplies to three provinces and forcing factories to close. On 12 March a large paper pulping complex was attacked and destroyed and 62 Czech civilians kidnapped. In the beginning of August the town of Cangamba in Moxico province was attacked with six battalions of Unita and South African troops which, because of the heroic resistance of the Angolan and Cuban troops, had to retreat. South Africa responded with

an aerial bombardment which completely destroyed the town.

### MOZAMBIQUE

Mozambique achieved independence on 25 June 1975 under Frelimo led by Samora Machel, and has suffered numerous attacks. As well as the air space violations, cross border incursions, land mining and bombing raids of its own forces, South Africa backs the MNR to carry out acts of banditry on the people. In this year alone dozens of people have been killed and injured by South African aggression, and millions of pounds of damage caused. In May Matola, a suburb of Maputo, was attacked during the rush hour. Planes strafed local residents and rocketed factories. The Petromoc oil refinery, the Somopal jam factory and local residential areas all came under fire, hit by at least 120 rockets and thousands of machine gun rounds. Six people died. It is not the first time South Africa has attacked Matola. In January 1981 South African commandos drove into Matola to attack a number of houses and killed 13 ANC members.

Also this year South African saboteurs were intercepted by Mozambican

## Police defend Apartheid!



On the day, 2 December, that P W Botha and Geoffrey Howe, South African and British foreign ministers, met in the South African Embassy, City of London Anti Apartheid Group started a 24 hour picket calling for the release of Nelson Mandela and all political prisoners held in South Africa.

It was a tremendous display of opposition to apartheid and British imperialism with some 500 people attending including Tony Benn, MPs, Councillors and many trade unions, students groups and political organisations.

As on previous occasions the police attempted firstly to prevent the picket taking place and secondly to provoke arrests. The day before the picket started apartheid loving Chief Superintendent Marsh informed us that because of the presence of Botha and Howe at a booze-up in this nest of spies the picket must take place in a local side street; the Embassy was to be barricaded off from both picketers and passers by. Marsh was told that we would only be prepared to picket directly opposite the Embassy. Although he said this was impossible for him to arrange, the following day it suddenly became possible after City Group had managed to have a question raised in the House of Commons and the issue raised by Labour MPs at a meeting with Sir Kenneth Newman.

The police do not run our pickets, our stewards do. David Reed, speaking for Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! made the point that the police were so indignant because their attempts to stop last year's non-stop picket had been defeated. The police are racist and apartheid loving because their job is to defend the capitalist system which is racist and apartheid loving. The strength of the picket was demonstrated when a passing black motorist who tooted his horn in solidarity with the picket was stopped by the police. Immediately stewards went to his support accompanied by a journalist and a photographer. Those on the picket chanted slogans for his release and after 5 minutes the police had let him go.

Now with the acquittal of 7 of the Trafalgar 9 the defenders of apartheid are licking their wounds and the South African racists are continually shaken by the weekly Friday pickets (5.30-7.30pm) of the Embassy held by City Group.

Chris Fraser

troops who captured 64 explosive charges and clocks for making time bombs. On 30 May a pilotless spy plane was shot down as it flew over Maputo province.

The MNR carries out a lot of South Africa's dirty work against the people of Mozambique. Its bandits attack trains and railway lines, capture people and beat and torture them while they go about their daily business. One man lost both his legs when he stepped on a MNR land mine.

### ZIMBABWE

Zimbabwe is the newest of the independent frontline states, and ever since her independence on 18 April 1980 has been included in South Africa's programme of destabilisation. Since independence there have been a number of incidents that are strongly suspected of being

South African backed. Thornhill Air-base was attacked in 1982, in what is believed to be a South African act of aggression. The blowing up of the oil pipeline and oil depot in Mozambique which supplied Zimbabwe with oil was a South African effort to destabilise Zimbabwe economically. There was a foiled sabotage attempt on Beit Bridge oil depot, near the border with South Africa, also suspected of being South African backed. There have been a number of counter revolutionaries caught in Zimbabwe who have admitted to being trained in South Africa. And fully armed South African soldiers were killed inside Zimbabwe last year. Both the road and rail link between Beira in Mozambique and the Zimbabwe border have suffered from sabotage and ambush by the MNR.

### SEYCHELLES

South Africa has extended its aggression to the Seychelles where it was involved in an attempted coup against the socialist government led by France Albert Rene. A senior South African intelligence officer who participated in the coup was captured, although at first South Africa denied all knowledge or involvement.

### LESOTHO

Even tiny Lesotho cannot escape South African aggression. There have been an increasing number of acts of sabotage and bomb attacks on economic and military targets. And there is evidence that the Lesotho Liberation Army has been infiltrated by South Africans so they can use it for destabilising activities.

On 9 December 1982, the South African regime murdered 42 people including 27 members of the ANC in a raid into Maseru the capital of Lesotho. Many of the victims, including children, were murdered in their sleep. Their homes were ransacked and burnt out. This brutal massacre is yet another example of the apartheid regime's methods of bludgeoning the frontline states to cease supporting the African National Congress and SWAPO.

Nomsa Langa

## MALESELA BENJAMIN MOLOISE Statement by the African National Congress

On the 7th November 1982, a detective warrant Officer of the South African Special Branch, Philipus Selepe of Mamelodi, Pretoria, was executed by a firing squad. Shortly afterwards, Malesela Benjamin Moloise was arrested and charged with the 'murder' of this notorious police officer.

Selepe had been a policeman for 30 years. He had been involved in many political arrests and trials, including the capture and torture of the combatants of Umkhonto We Sizwe, Thabo Motaung, Simon Mogoerane and Jerry Mosololi who were hanged on June 9th this year. Benjamin Moloise had himself been detained in connection with this latter trial and was brought to court as a State witness.

Once he was in the witness box, Moloise refused to answer questions saying that statements he had earlier given to the police and a magistrate were extracted from him under duress.

It is clear that having failed to break him and turn him into a traitor, and having further failed to capture the unit of Umkhonto We Sizwe which was responsible for Selepe's execution, the torturers of our people decided to revenge themselves on Moloise by charging him with this execution.

Throughout his trial, Moloise has maintained his innocence. His application for leave to appeal has now been turned down. It is therefore obvious that Selepe's masters are determined to see Benjamin Moloise dead.

In the light of this latest decision, we hereby wish to state categorically and unequivocally that Moloise was wrongly arrested and falsely charged and convicted as he had absolutely nothing to do with the execution of Selepe at any stage.

When he found Moloise guilty and sentenced him to death on June 6th 1983, it became clear that the judge who tried the case, one Van Dyk, had turned himself into a willing tool for the commission of an inexcusable crime, namely the planned and vengeful assassination of Benjamin Moloise.

We salute this patriot who, even as he was sentenced to death, spoke bravely of his commitment to a free and democratic South Africa, knowing full well that this would further enrage those who had conspired to murder him.

Thabo Mbeki: Director of Information  
Lusaka, Zambia.  
November 29th 1983

The execution could take place at any time: readers are urged to:

Write to Sir Geoffrey Howe, Secretary of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Downing Street, London SW1 to urge the British government to intervene to stop the execution.

Write to the State President, 'Presidencia', Bryntirion, Pretoria, South Africa urging that the death sentence be commuted.

## OPPOSE THE PTA — all of it!

In FRFI 34 we drew attention to the new 'Prevention of Terrorism Bill' which includes the recommendation that the power of arrest under the old Prevention of Terrorism Act be 'available for use against suspected international terrorists of any group'. In reality the PTA has been used for the last 9 years to harass and intimidate the Irish community in Britain. Now the state is planning to broaden the use of the act to include members and supporters of other liberation movements in this country, for example the movements of Central America, Middle East and Southern Africa.

Progressive forces here from solidarity groups to communists must unite to defeat this anti-democratic law. We must unite to oppose the PTA in total. No longer will the law be anti-Irish-it will be anti-Irish, anti-Central American, anti-Asian and anti-African. An attack on one section in this country is an attack on all — an attack on Irish activists is an attack on all anti-imperialists, and the failure of other groups to defend the rights of Irish activists is to weaken the whole movement.

It is in this context that the position adopted by the solidarity movement in this country, the Anti Apartheid Movement, is divisive and sectarian. The AAM urge their members to:

'raise this matter immediately with your MP, and ask for his support to ensure that the powers in the Bill will not apply to perfectly legitimate activities of the OAU recognised liberation movements based in Britain.'

The OAU (Organisation of African Unity) does not recognise the liberation movements of Ireland, Central and Latin America, nor the movements of Iran and other Asian countries. Effectively the AAM is saying that whilst it is alright to attack members and supporters of the liberation movements in Ireland, Iran, Central America and elsewhere, an exception should be made in the case of Southern Africa. We would urge all readers, especially those who are members of the AAM, to raise this question and urge a different policy — a defence of democracy in the interests of the whole movement.



# FIGHT RACISM

## SELF DEFENCE IS NO OFFENCE

The trial of the Newham 8, charged with threatening behaviour, causing an affray and 'conspiracy to assault persons unknown' began at the Old Bailey on 17 November. The 8 black youth were arrested in September 1982 while guarding local schoolkids playing football from constant fascist attacks. Fearing the self organisation of the black community, the police are trying to make an example of the Newham 8.

The trial began with a victory when the police, fearing sure humiliation dropped the 'conspiracy' charges. The case is following the classical style of police frame-ups - a combination of lies and duplicity. The police have not been able to cover up the fact that, when arrested, the Newham 8 were bundled into vans and assaulted. It has also been revealed that the police have been tampering with exhibits they are presenting as evidence. So flagrant has this been that judge Lymbery has felt it necessary to call for an inquiry into the matter. The court battle is revealing the full truth of direct and indirect police collaboration with racists in Newham who are allowed to ram-page unchecked. The police claimed to be totally unaware of racist attacks, yet were forced to let slip that it is common practice for them to check Asian peoples' passports when they go to the police station to report racist attacks.

The trial of the eight youth has not yet ended. But support for them from the black community has been evident on the daily pickets organised by the Newham 8 Defence Campaign. Recognising that the case represents a serious attack on the right of black people to organise in defence against racist attacks, over 400 people, including schoolchildren who went on strike that day, attended

the first picket on 14 November when the trial was due to start. The picketers have not been intimidated by racist building workers nearby who have hurled abuse and eggs at them. The police claimed there was nothing they could do about it! Support for the pickets has come from as far away as Birmingham with a contingent which brought a rousing revolutionary internationalist spirit with their chants 'The Newham 8 are warriors! The PLO are warriors! The FMLN are warriors! The IRA are warriors! The INLA are warriors!'

Not surprisingly the bourgeois press is assisting the police in its efforts to convict the Newham 8 and undermine the right of black people to self-defence. Their headlines such as 'Sergeant beaten by Asian gang' and 'Vengeance mob beat up policemen' expose them as col-



PAUL MATTHESSON

laborators with the police.

As we go to press, the final defence submissions are being made before the jury retires to pass judgement. We say 'Self Defence is No Offence'. For further information contact the

Newham 8 Defence Campaign at 555-3311.

**Ace Kelly  
Eddie Abrahams**

## CIRUS NOOR IMPRISONED

Cirus Noor's four day trial at the Old Bailey ended on 1 December when he was sentenced to 2 years and 4 months imprisonment. Cirus stood charged with 4 counts of 'attempted arson on Bethnal Green police station' and 2 of being in possession of paraffin 'bombs'. The nature of the charges and the police story were designed to exact maximum sentences and cover up the fact that on the night of 12 April the police station was virtually empty due to most officers being on duty in the nearby Shakespeare pub. The police claimed to have caught Cirus outside the station in the act of 'bombing' it. He apparently ran into the station and tried again, where another 'violent struggle' took place until he was 'subdued'.

Cirus and his barrister did a brilliant job of destroying the police story. The police could not account for the fact that not one of them had the slightest injury after being engaged in 'violent struggle' with the well-built and fit Cirus. Neither could they account for the fact that a matchbox remained intact after apparently being under several large men, nor for the fact that no paraffin was spilt on any clothing or the floor.



Cirus Noor

In the dock Cirus unfolded the true story of what happened on the night of 12 April and why. Cirus told how during the protests to find the truth into his ex-schoolfriend Colin Roach's death, the police continually met the people's peaceful protest with brutality and arrests. They had arrested 100, imprisoned 7 black youth, Colin's father had also been arrested and assaulted and Cirus himself had been arrested 3 times. Cirus determined to make a protest, using paraffin, rather than petrol in order not to cause anyone an injury. His first concern was not to hurt anyone,

acquitted of the 4 attempted arson charges but convicted of possessing paraffin 'bombs'. He was sentenced to 2 years in prison. In addition he was also given 1 month following his arrest on the 12 March Colin Roach demonstration, 9 months for breach of probation and 4 months for a previous suspended sentence.

In his final remarks, Judge Herrod, revealing the corruption of British courts, flew in the face of the facts, the jury's verdict and reality when he recommended that DC Brown be 'commended for acting in the highest tradition of gallantry and bravery' for incidents which were proved never to have taken place.

All FRFI readers are urged to write to Cirus at HM Prison, Wandsworth, Heathfield Road, London SW18.

**Ace Kelly**  
Chair Stoke Newington and Hackney Defence Campaign

## BEATEN BY SCREWS

While awaiting trial in Pentonville Prison, Cirus Noor was brutally attacked by upwards of 25 prison officers (POs) on 17 November. Ace Kelly Chair of the Stoke Newington and Hackney Defence Campaign (SNHDC) was visiting at the time and witnessed the event. Basically, Cirus didn't finish his cup of coffee as quickly as the POs would have wished. He was threatened twice and then rushed by 6 POs, who were joined by a further 25 or so. They rushed in kicking and punching Cirus to the ground. Ace himself was grabbed and surrounded by POs, escorted out of the prison and abused. The other visitors and prisoners were cordoned off while this attack took place.

The SNHDC initiated a campaign of phone calls to the prison, to the press, MPs, councillors and progressive groups and individuals. The next day the authorities were denying that Cirus had been assaulted or that he had sustained any injuries. The Home Office claimed that he had merely been 'removed' and that his size justified the amount of POs used! Councillor Joseph Merwitt was told by the Governor that 'malicious rumours were being spread for political reasons' and that he certainly could visit the prison... in 2 months time after writing in! Barrister Sarah Forster did however succeed in visiting Cirus and

described him as being 'extensively bruised... some clearly boot prints.'

Prison and police harassment of Cirus and his friends continued on 20 November when Cirus was visited by Ruby Noorani. On ending the visit she was arrested and taken to Islington police station on 'suspicion of smuggling out a letter'. In the police station she was strip searched and even had her anus examined. These were no more than disgusting attempts to humiliate her as the police released Ruby without charge after 45 minutes. Needless to say Ruby is taking out charges against the police.

Following these incidents, Cirus informed his solicitor that he was daily being visited by psychiatrists trying to have him 'sectioned' under the Mental Health Act (ie certified mad). They are claiming that he is 'violent and hyper-maniac'. On threat of certifying him mad, they tried to force him to take Largactil - commonly known as the liquid cash and used widely in prisons to control prisoners who stand up for their rights.

These attempts to break Cirus's spirit failed as was demonstrated in the course of his trial. We say Hands Off Cirus Noor! No Mental Health Act! Stop Prison Brutality!  
**Ace Kelly**

## inbrief

### ● Esther Ankeli

Esther was married in Nigeria in 1972 and came to England to join her husband in 1977. The marriage broke down in 1980, Esther was given custody of their two children, Angela 10 and Felix 3 who was British-born.

Esther has, through hard work, established a home for herself and her children, but now is faced with deportation because of her marriage breakdown.

Esther is one of an increasing number of women faced with the injustice of the racist/sexist legal system which makes women dependent on the goodwill of their husbands for the right to live in this country.

If Esther is deported, she and her children would be deprived of the only way of life they know and as a divorcee in Nigeria would be reduced to begging in the street.

Donations and further information from: Abasindi-Co-Op, Moss Side, Manchester M15.

### ● Josie Thomas must stay

On 12 January the second half of the appeal against the Home Office deportation order against Josie Thomas is to be heard. Josie Thomas has had to fight for the right to live in Britain even though she came here in 1962 and her children were born here. She is threatened with deportation due to the racist British immigration laws which have denied her British citizenship.

Josie Thomas is determined to fight to stay in Britain. In this fight it is Josie who has to prove that she has a right to stay in Britain, rather than the Home Office proving that she has no right. Black people have no rights in Britain unless they are fought for. In the case at the tribunal hearing in Leeds every detail of her personal life, her health, her children, her finances had to be defended.

No Deportations! Josie must stay!  
Contact Josephine Thomas Support Committee, c/o 54 Deighton Road, Huddersfield, HD2 2UF.  
**Keith and Chas**

### ● Another SNHDC Victory

Asela Nanayakkara - arrested after the Stoke Newington and Hackney Defence Campaign picket of Old Street Magistrates Court on 27 July - walked free from Bow Road Juvenile court in December. He defeated the police on two charges, threatening behaviour and swearing. As usual, apart from their identical 'notes', the police witnesses gave two different stories of what was supposed to have happened. Asela had in fact been standing on the court steps getting witnesses for a young black SNHDC supporter who had just been arrested. Police in a van had jeered and made abusive gestures at him before arresting him. Photographs showed the peaceful, disciplined nature of the picket, and the large numbers of police, who had earlier threatened to arrest the whole picket! In court the photographer was asked if he went 'out of his way' to get photographs of police in compromising situations - 'I don't have to', he answered, 'they put themselves there'.

**Charles Bolton**

### ● Dole Office race checks

A year ago we reported that 'ethnic monitoring' of the unemployed was going to start in January of this year but that due to opposition from dole office staff it was postponed. The government has recently announced that it will now start 'ethnic monitoring' of unemployed people in January or February 1984. There will be three racial categories: a) West Indian/African; b) Asian; c) Others. Each category will have a code which will be fed into the computer alongside the claimant's national insurance number (this number is the key to all major personal details). Of course the government says statistics are needed to identify 'racial disadvantage'. But the very report which first recommended monitoring-the Rayner report - also implied that black people were more likely to commit 'fraud' than white people. With the new Regional Benefit Investigation Teams now in action one of the real purposes of these race checks becomes clear - a tool for racist harassment. 'Ethnic monitoring' is a low-level intelligence gathering operation - another weapon in the state's armoury aimed at the oppressed. But this racist attack can be defeated. Claimants can refuse to be checked, and dole office workers can refuse to carry out the checks.

Fight Racism! No Ethnic Monitoring!  
**Gerald Johnson**

### Brent Council Area Health Authority welds its gates to the public

On Monday 5 December, the Brent Council Area Health Authority (AHA) met in Belvedere House behind padlocked and welded gates. A barbed wire fence at the back and a large contingent of police were other means employed to keep the public out of the meeting which was called to overturn a democratic decision in September not to implement the £250,000 cuts in health services.

The decision to call the meeting behind closed doors was taken by Lena Talmage (nominee of the Secretary of State with no previous experience in the health service). It was supported by David Pashley, administrator of the AHA who claimed they were within their rights to keep the public out as the 2 previous meetings had been severely disrupted. During the meeting Lena Talmage refused to take discussion on the public being excluded from the meeting. Laurie Nerva chair of the Labour Party Borough Social Services, and others against the action were not allowed to address the chair. Councillor Graham Durham stood beside Talmage saying that he would not allow her not to have a debate. For this he was removed by 2 policemen at the request of the chair on the grounds that he was interfering with the progress of the meeting.

Laurie Nerva told FRFI:

'I don't advocate violence, but if they think that by excluding the public from meetings at which decisions contrary to those already agreed democratically are to be taken they will silence opposition, they are wrong. People will protest in whatever way is left to them.'

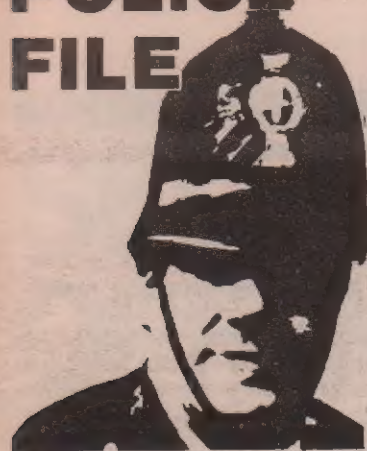
Are the ruling class and their faithful servants so afraid of the power of the oppressed masses that they must now take to welding gates and having their public meetings defended by the police to prevent the public attending?  
**Ken Hughes**







## POLICE FILE



### ● Strip fine

An internal police inquiry has begun into allegations that a 20-year-old woman wanted for non-payment of fines had performed a strip at a Nottingham party for detectives, and was then given a lift home. The detectives were from Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, and according to a police spokesman, discussions are being held at 'a very senior level' between the two forces, and that the Derbyshire Chief Constable would receive a full report.

### ● Constables

But from a 'very senior level' is coming a strong whiff of corruption and unless he's lucky the Chief Constable of Derbyshire will not remain in office long enough to read the report. Derbyshire County Council is investigating allegations that the princely sum of £23,000 was spent on furnishing his office... with Constables no doubt.

### ● Wages of sin

Evidence is growing that a police constable performing 'duties' at Greenham Common airbase is likely to earn almost enough money to decorate a Chief Constable's office. One woman police constable from Thames Valley police piled up £19,000 in the past year while defending 'peace through security' at the airbase.

### ● Job motivation

What is it (apart from their wages of sin) which drives your average bobby to carry out his investigations? A clue emerged after recent trouble at Lambeth Town Hall when a group of right-wing Zionists attacked American author Lewin Brenner. Two people were hospitalised by these thugs, but the registration numbers of their cars were noted by the local MP, John Fraser. For once the sympathies of the police for right wing terrorists were overcome: when they arrived on the scene one of them was heard to remark 'We've got to take this one seriously, there's an MP involved.'

### ● Plastic killers

The Metropolitan police now have a stockpile of 10,000 plastic bullets for use against democratically-minded citizens of the capital. The total number of these plastic killers available to police forces in England and Wales is 20,000.

### ● Like father like son?

24 year old PC Robert Sampson has resigned from the force following allegations that he has stolen money. PC Sampson is no ordinary cop, he is the son of West Yorkshire's Chief Constable Mr Colin Sampson.

### ● More vice in Manchester

Following the report in last month's police file about the vice in Manchester vice squad and their after-time drinking, this month the ordinary Manchester beat bobbies not to be outdone, have been practising their art. Apparently, after a night's drinking, nine policemen and two policewomen accused a disabled 51 year old man of stealing a sheepskin coat. They followed him out of the pub and he was found a short while later, beaten and bleeding, in a back alley. His shoes, watch, and hearing aid stolen. A sergeant and two constables have been charged with robbery and wounding.

# notes and comments

## LECH WALESA-WORTHY WINNER OF NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

The imperialists have awarded Lech Walesa, the Polish counter-revolutionary the Nobel Peace Prize in an attempt to boost the flagging fortunes of the reactionary Solidarity organisation. As Walesa himself said:

'it came at the right time. We were all a bit worn, a bit tired and it was a terrific boost for our morale. It is also the right time and the right way to remind Western public opinion that our struggle continues.'

Further evidence that the presentation was an imperialist stunt came when Walesa attended mass on the day of the award, seated next to the US charge d'affaires, John R Davis and his wife Helen. Later he dined with the top-ranking US diplomats in Poland, who passed on Emperor Reagan's congratulations.

All this is fully in the tradition of the Nobel Peace Prize. The prize was originally established by the millionaire arms king Alfred Nobel, the inventor of dynamite, who wanted people to forget his responsibility for the death and destruction inflicted on people by imperialist inspired war.

Although leaders of the oppressed have occasionally been awarded the prize—the ANC leader Albert Luthuli in 1960 (no slap-up dinner with US diplomats for him), and Martin Luther King, US Civil Rights leader in 1965 (murdered fighting for freedom in the USA)—the prize has in recent years been given to those who serve imperialism's interests. For instance:

■ 1973 Henry Kissinger, US Secretary of State responsible for the murder of hundreds of thousands of people in South East Asia; jointly with Le Duc Tho, Secretary of the Vietnam Workers Party, leading the resistance to US imperialism. Le Duc Tho refused to accept the prize because of violations of the Paris agreements by the US imperialists and their puppet regime. In 1975, the Nobel Committee withdrew the prize from Le Duc Tho, but not from Kissinger.

■ 1975 Andrei Sakharov, Russian counter-revolutionary who called for the restoration of capitalism, increased imperialist pressure on the socialist countries, and attacked the Vietnamese victory over US imperialism as a 'tragic development'.

■ 1976 Betty Williams and Mairead Corrigan, the so-called peace people for their attempts to subvert the Irish revolution.

■ 1978 Zionist Menachem Begin and tyrant Anwar Sadat for their joint efforts to destroy the Palestinian revolution. Yes, Lech Walesa is indeed worthy of a place in this parade of criminals and opportunists! Steve Palmer

## DISHONEST WELSH POLICE

When Mr Justice Farquharson summed up the 10 week long Welsh explosives conspiracy trial in November he told the jury that:

'The central decision you have to make is as to the honesty of the witnesses. The main contest is between the police and the defendants'.

18 hours later the jury returned to acquit 4 of the 5 defendants pleading not guilty to causing explosions in South Wales and England. The fifth, Brian Rees was acquitted of the more serious charge of conspiracy to destroy property and convicted of possession of detonators for which he got 3 years. The jury had clearly chosen the honesty of the Welsh Republicans before that of the police. The four who had been acquitted pointed out that the only evidence against 3 of them had been confessions forced by 'brutal interrogation and threats'. Whilst being interrogated Nicholas Hodges described how they tried to get him to implicate Dafydd Elis Thomas MP as the brains behind the bombing campaign presumably because of Dafydd's support for Welsh and Irish Republicanism and his defence of democratic rights. The four pointed out that despite being acquitted under British law they had no automatic right of redress for their time in prison (up to 10 months) on remand!

The judge further proved what a farce 'British justice' is by giving vicious sentences to the other 2 defendants who had pleaded guilty. Dafydd Ladd got 9 years for possession of detonators with intent to endanger life and property and obtaining a false birth certificate and passport having jumped bail during the 'Persons Unknown'

## THATCHER BLEEDS POOR AND FATTENS RICH

Latest official figures show that there has been a dramatic increase in long-term unemployment and a resultant rise in the number of people forced to live in poverty. The latest edition of *Social Trends*, the annual government statistical survey, shows that 20% of unemployed men and 25% of unemployed women had been out of work for 1-2 years and 25% of men and 15% of women for more than two years. By 1982, 12% of households had someone unemployed and 22% of households had some experience of unemployment in the previous 12 months. The recent *Family Expenditure Survey* shows that 15m people—nearly 3 out of 10 people—were living in poverty in 1981—an increase of 3.5m in the 2 years since 1979. And of these 15m people, 2.8m were existing in circumstances defined as 'beneath supplementary level' ie in dire poverty. 80% of families with children where the father is unemployed come into this category. The survey also shows that between 1979-81 poverty amongst sick and disabled people increased by 67% and amongst single parents by 55%.

The response of Thatcher's government to this rise in unemployment and poverty has been one of increasing callousness. Millions have been plunged into deeper poverty by cuts in benefit. Firstly, the change in the method of calculating benefit has this year brought about a 2% cut because benefits are no longer calculated according to predicted levels of inflation but on the previous year's inflation rate. Secondly, recent cuts in housing benefit have been followed by further cuts imposed on young people in the form of the withdrawal of a 'non-householders supplementary benefit addition' (withdrawn last year from 16-17 year olds), and now from 18-20 year olds, resulting in a cut of £3.10 per week. With more and more people forced to claim some form of supplementary benefit—7.2m by February 1983—and as these 'benefits' are slashed by the merciless Thatcher government, a glaring gap now exists be-

tween those who are employed and those who are forced to exist on state benefits. In 1982, supplementary benefit (including housing and rates) as a proportion of the average men's wage, was 64%. In fact much of the increase in benefits has been due to the huge rise in council house rent and rates, brought about by government policies.

At the other end of the scale, Thatcher has fattened the incomes of the rich by reductions in taxation. The real earnings of a married man with 2 children earning £44,000 a year, have risen by 54% during the last 5 years—10 times the increase over the same period for a man with average earnings. Thatcher and her gang do not give a damn about mass poverty. They do not give a damn that Age Concern predicts that 44,000 people aged over 50 will die this year alone from cold. 'Help Yourself' is Thatcher's motto both for the sick, the old, the unemployed and for the rich, who are encouraged to dig their hands deeper into the wealth stolen from the people. Olivia Adamson

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

With a masterstroke of agricultural science President Reagan opened 1983 with a Payment-in-Kind programme for US farmers. Under this scheme US farmers receive crops from the government which they can sell in exchange for not growing crops themselves! So far a third of US farmland has been put under the programme which is costing an estimated \$12 billion. Giant corporate landowners like Shell Oil and Chevron have received millions of dollars worth of wheat and cotton to sell. Less fortunate have been those small farmers foolish enough to try and use their land to produce the food which people need: the *Sunday Times* reports that up to September there have been 600 farm bankruptcies in Iowa this year alone, and that farm auctions in the same state are running at 500 a month.

In neighbouring Minnesota, the state capital Minneapolis reports that 60,000 more people sought emergency food assistance up to September than in the whole of 1982. A total of 180,000 in just one typical US city! A fifth of all children, expectant and nursing mothers are reported by the Health Department to be suffering from anaemia due to malnutrition. The US government has cut spending on food stamps by 13% and child nutrition programmes by 28%. But, capitalism is ingenious and if it can solve the problem of farmers growing crops it can solve the problem of hunger too: US TV now advertises Dexatrim Appetite Control tablets. Trevor Rayne

## COVER-UP AT WINDSCALE

Windscale in Cumbria, Britain's only nuclear reprocessing plant, may have had its name changed (to Sellafield) but its habits remain the same. In 1957 two towers, part of the original reactor, were sealed up after a fire—hundreds of gallons of milk from neighbouring farms had to be poured down the drain. Three years ago, ministers were warned that the public beaches near Windscale contained 'hot spots' of radioactivity by Dr Barry Matthews who was

JOHN STURROCK/NETWORK



carrying out soil mapping in the Windscale area for the Agricultural Research Council. He found unusually high radioactivity around the Digg Stream outlet on the beach at Seascale (a village a mile from the Sellafield plant). He wrote to British Nuclear Fuels Ltd (BNFL) who replied that everything was carefully monitored and within authorised limits and procedures. He then wrote to his MP, Whitelaw, then Home Secretary, who passed it onto Michael Heseltine at the Department of the Environment. He received the same reply. After Dr Matthews casually warned a visiting family not to go on the beach at Seascale because of radioactive contamination, the family raised the question with their MP John Cunningham. When he in turn investigated the complaint he received a letter from BNFL on 4 November 1980 stating that 'the comments made by the individual from the soil survey were unwarranted'. Dr Matthews was subsequently taken before an internal tribunal and summarily dismissed. On appeal he was found to have been wrongfully dismissed and was compensated but not reinstated.

This autumn a Yorkshire Television programme revealed that the leukaemia rate is 10 times the norm in children under 10 living on the Cumbria coast. The response of medical apologists for BNFL has been to the effect that 'statistical abnormalities' do occur—ie that this is just a coincidence! Plutonium and other radioactive substances in the house dust in the Windscale region are at a high level, and some stretches of beach have radiation 1000 times the normal background levels. BNFL has said 'We emphatically deny that operations at Windscale may have caused cancer in children on the Cumbrian coast.'

Greenpeace divers have attempted to block a discharging wastepipe from Sellafield thus ignoring a court order to stop interfering with the pipeline, and they have been fined £50,000 for contempt of court. They have been warned that further actions could lead to seizure of their funds. Engineers at Sellafield have passed a vote of no confidence in BNFL—saying that leaks could occur at any time. The government, now admitting 'concern' has brought about the fencing off of public beaches, but this is only hypocrisy as a result of public pressure. Britain is now the only country in the world to dump nuclear waste into the sea—and to break the February 1983 London Dumping agreement. Dumping has

only been stopped due to union action initiated by the National Union of Seamen who have photocopied documents to prove that the government intends to dump 'high-level' (as opposed to low-level hospital) waste at sea. A massive government-aided cover-up has taken place at Sellafield where human life is slowly being destroyed. Anyone trying to prevent it must realise they begin a long hard struggle. Liz Cherry

## HEALTH: IMPERIALISM VS SOCIALISM

According to the World Health Organisation the daily average supply of calories in Britain in 1980 was 3,306 while in over half the world the average was 2,000. Compare this with 3,372 in the Soviet Union, 3,477 in Czechoslovakia and 2,723 in Cuba. One way that the level of health care can be measured is by the number of people per doctor: in 1980 there were 7,970 per doctor in the imperialist dominated Philippines, 4,020 in Haiti, while the figure for socialist Cuba was 700. There are 650 people per doctor in Britain and 360 in socialist Czechoslovakia. Tony Sheridan

## THE LONG ARM OF THE SPECIAL BRANCH

Writing letters to newspapers can have unexpected results. Ex-teacher Mrs Madeline Haigh wrote one to her local paper in 1981 expressing her concern about cruise missiles.

After the letter was published strange voices phoned her and strange men made visits to her home. One of these strangers said he was a CID officer making enquiries about a small debt she owed to a mail order firm. As she hadn't a clue what he was talking about Mrs Haigh phoned the firm later and was told they hadn't a clue what she was talking about either. She then contacted the local police in Sutton Coldfield who said they didn't know anything about her visitors who must have been 'bogus policemen'. Mrs Haigh wasn't satisfied so she pursued the matter for two years to get an apology from West Midlands Chief Constable Philip Knights who assured her MP, Tory minister Norman Fowler, that Mrs Haigh had not been investigated.

All this caused a bit of a row. Knights had finally admitted that Mrs Haigh had in fact been investigated by West Midlands Special Branch who, Knights says in his report, interpreted her letter as meaning she might support or get involved in protests likely to become violent. He justified his officers' actions by saying that although Mrs Haigh wasn't a 'subversive', her case had criminal potentialities in the field of public order and he said Special Branch regularly carry out enquiries on people who write to newspapers. This case shows how wide are the activities of Britain's secret police who keep under surveillance not only political activists and 'industrial militants' but also middle-class people who mildly express views not approved of by the imperialist state. Gerald Johnson

## TORIES BLOCK RIGHT FOR DISABLED

On 18 November the Tories effectively blocked a private member's bill for the disabled which made discrimination against disabled people illegal and which called for the setting up of a disablement commission, 50% of whom would be disabled. For the second time the Tories used parliamentary trickery to prevent a bill for the disabled even starting its way through the House of Commons. The Minister for the Disabled, Tony Newton, commenting on this callous treatment of the bill stated that it was 'ineffective' and anyway would have cost too much over £30m. Not much more than the cost of one jet fighter.

This disgusting treatment of the sick and disabled plumbed new depths the following week when a man in Bristol won a social security tribunal case to get an orthopaedic mattress for his bad back. Within 24 hours of the ruling, the atrocious Rhodes Boyson, famous for his extreme right-wing views and now Minister of Social Security, put out a draft regulation stopping further payments of this kind. By midnight the next day, it was law. Terrified that many more poor and disabled people would benefit from this ruling, the government moved with astonishing speed to reverse the decision of the supposedly independent tribunal. So much for Thatcher's democracy! Olivia Adamson



## Caribbean reaction and misery

The East Caribbean police and troops that trailed the US invasion forces into Grenada were drawn from Dominica, Jamaica, Barbados, St Lucia, St Vincent, Antigua and St Kitts-Nevis. Their normal employment consists of upholding imperialism's interests in their area and repressing any opposition to the mass unemployment and poverty which scourge the East Caribbean.

The British Labour Party formed the joint Eastern Caribbean Defence Force in 1979. Headquartered in Barbados, it was used in December of that year to put down a Rastafarian uprising on Union Island, St Vincent. Barbadian Prime Minister Adams boasted of his willingness to send troops to any other Caribbean island. British capital thanked him with \$10m worth of military aid.

Between 1981 and 1983 imperial military aid to the Eastern Caribbean countries neighbouring Grenada multiplied five fold, and in addition British and US banks splashed local reactionary regimes with credits to use on arms stockpiles. For example, Barbados spent thirty-two times as much on weapons last year as six years ago! Its police and troops are trained by the self-same Royal Marines that stamp all over the rights of the nationalist people in the Six Counties of Ireland. They are equipped with British supplied gunboats and the same armour-plated landrovers, bristling with guns, that patrol the streets of Belfast and Derry.

**JAMAICA** Seaga's economic policies are directed by the IMF and other imperialist banks. Jamaican debt per person now stands at US \$1,000. Within three years debt repayments will exceed export earnings on current trends. Farming communities are suffering malnutrition as crops rot in the fields for want of markets and the people have no money to buy 'fish kind', flour, salt or oil. Jamaica's wealth is being poured into the coffers of the pirate banks. Services are slashed on their orders: in one week three hundred bus workers were sacked, a service vital to most Jamaican people. Thirty-five per cent of children of school going age are not enrolled. Half Jamaica's youth are unemployed. Meanwhile, dwindling currency reserves go to furnish tourist areas with beauty contests, cocktail stirrers, and plastic flowers! This humiliation is enforced by police guns. The Assistant Chief Constable of the Northumbria police is only the latest in a steady stream of British police and troops sent to train and advise the Jamaican police. The SAS and US Green Berets also train in Jamaica.

CIA-installed Prime Minister Seaga of Jamaica has taken the opportunity of the Grenadian invasion to call a general election two years before it is due, and coincident with a forty-three per cent devaluation of the Jamaican dollar that

will intensify poverty among Jamaicans. Opposition parties have refused to partake in the electoral bear-garden awash with the blood of Cuban and Grenadian martyrs. Seaga's government will take a further term of office.

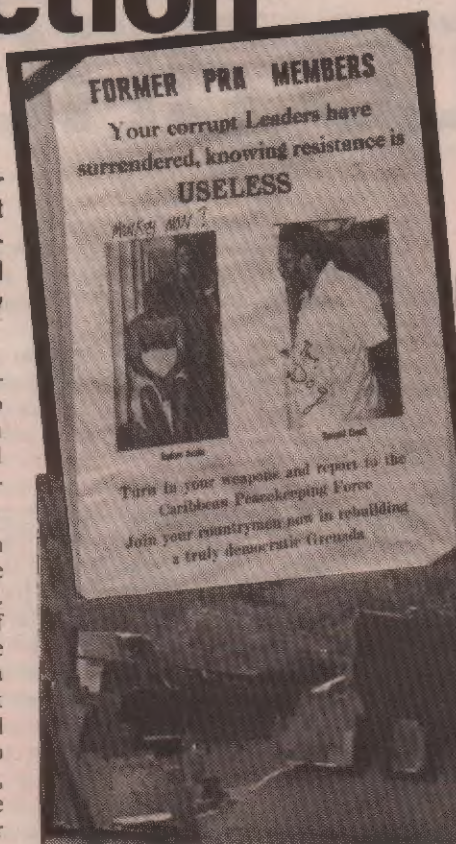
**BARBADOS** Cuba's revolution cleared out the parasitic growths of the US tourist trade and its attendant Mafia. However, the sprawling rubbish heap of US capitalism quickly spilled onto the other Caribbean islands. US and British hotels dominate the island and black people are not allowed onto many hotel beaches. Rather, they are expected to serve as shoe-shine boys, bartenders, drug peddlers and prostitutes. When the US fleet docked in Bridgetown earlier this year 6,000 sailors were given \$3m to spend in four days. As a special treat for the locals, Prince Andrew's HMS Invincible also paid a call. Imperialism would have the Caribbean islands vying with each other for the status of most favoured whore! Barbadian school girls have been forced into pornographic films made for US consumption, then murdered and dumped in sugar cane fields by crime syndicates that blend this trade with narcotics peddling.

**ST LUCIA** It is illegal to show films or videos without police permission. Their interest is not in arresting pornography but political opposition. It is illegal to wear the popular 'greens' fatigue jackets associated with the Cuban revolution. Opposition politicians have been branded as 'Libyan terrorists'.

**ST VINCENT** In 1981 the government devised a Public Safety and Public Order Act intended to forbid anything from pamphlet to gesture it considered 'undemocratic' or promoting 'ill will between classes' on pain of seven years' imprisonment. Strikes in any industry the state considered 'essential' would be illegal. Determined opposition from workers has shelved this legislation for the time being.

**ANTIGUA** This tiny island hosts both a US naval and air base along with a booster for 'Voice of America' radio and a Barbadian intelligence unit. The opposition press is constantly harassed and the right to strike is not recognised in the constitution.

**ST KITTS-NEVIS** This September St Kitts-Nevis was formally granted independence after an empty British



## GRENADA New Jewel Movement speaks

Operation Invasion of Grenada completed, the United States has now moved to a new stage of effective occupation of the island. While the bourgeois press is busy trumpeting the withdrawal of US combat troops, they neglect to stress the fact that hundreds of US personnel including 'propaganda' experts and 'military police' remain to enforce the continued heavy repression on the island.

Left, US propaganda poster and racist marine graffiti; below, Radio Free Grenada after US bombing

House of Commons passed the independence bill. Kittitian Labour leaders and opposition politicians boycotted the celebrations, condemning the constitution as being devised to keep them from power.

**DOMINICA** The Charles' government has cut infrastructural spending on roads, buildings, electricity by 30% this year: fish putrify for want of a preservative factory. The government intends to introduce the death penalty for 'treason' and give the police powers to detain people and prevent their access to bail. In 1981 the government drafted emergency powers that revived a law effectively legitimising the shooting of Rastas on sight; thirteen people were gunned down in a single day.

Unemployment is rising and repression descending across the Caribbean even above its customary 30 to 50 per cent. Looming before its people are the horrors of Haiti, a land whose regime was US-installed and where half the children die by the age of four; where 85% illiteracy reigns in a country with thirty five prisons for every high school and 189 soldiers for each teacher, and whose 'anti-subversion' force, the Leopards, are trained by the United States.

This is the model for the Caribbean people that imperialism holds up and that is why it has smashed Grenada! The oppressed Caribbean people have no choice but to unite across the islands, unite with those who fight imperialism within the USA and Britain and strike down the predators that hover above them.

Trevor Rayne

All reports coming from Grenada confirm that the puppet 'interim government' set up after the invasion is simply not functioning. The 'cabinet' is in fact a committee consisting of the General of the US Armed Forces, the US Ambassador Charles Gillespie, the Governor General Sir Paul Scoon and the head of the Caribbean Force. This committee which is clearly US controlled meets daily at 10am and with the troops is the main instrument of US rule. The interim government is frequently not even represented at these meetings. In any case, without the leadership of the principled Mr Alistair McIntyre, the PIG (Puppet Interim Government) has dissolved into vacuous ineffectiveness. Meanwhile, as confirmed by Mr Anthony Rushford, the British so-called 'constitution expert', Sir Paul Scoon has refused to return to his constitutional ceremonial role and increasingly allows himself to be used as the mouthpiece of US domination.

The main thrust of present US policy is, as expected, the crushing of the progressive movement and particularly the New Jewel Movement. At least 350 political prisoners are being held, and families have expressed concern at 'regular beatings'. Former NJM members and supporters of the revolution not actually permanently detained are subject to frequent 'pick-ups' and interrogation, and road blocks, personal searches, and searches of homes are everyday occurrences. At the same time known supporters of the revolution

have arbitrarily been sent home from their jobs. All 'foreigners', ironically not Americans, who had been working for the PRG were given 24 hours to leave the island. The result of all this is that the administration is even more crippled by an acute shortage of critical skills. The Ministry of Finance is said to be without economists, and many schools are only partially functioning because of a shortage of teachers.

Otherwise the US is, as expected, concentrating on attempts to discredit the revolution. Despite popular concern they seem determined to confirm their own myth that the new international airport was intended as a military installation by moving swiftly to turn it into a US military base themselves. For the first time in its short history our international airport has been sealed off from the people and deemed a 'security area'. Lately there have been attacks on the PRG economic policy as seen by Sir Paul 'Gillespie' Scoon's recent tirades. Since the PRG economic achievements have already been confirmed by internationally prestigious organisations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, it can only be assumed that the US reputed economic chaos has been caused by the destructive 7-day war and subsequent civil disruption occasioned by the invasion itself.

Despite their efforts however the US have of course been unable to deny the real benefits of the revolution in the eyes of the working people. A survey allegedly done by US personnel themselves has revealed that the majority of the population continue to support the NJM. Hence the elections, first promised within 6 months, have been put off indefinitely to allow time for the continued effort to destroy the NJM. The efforts to deny the achievements of the revolution can only rebound in discrediting US propaganda itself and building resistance to the occupation.

Carol Davis  
New Jewel Movement

The NJM Support Group (UK) urgently need funds to continue the struggle. Write to the NJM Support Group (UK), c/o 4 Windus Walk, London N16. Tel 01-806-9112.

## Nicaragua

Early this year, President Reagan presented Nicaraguan counter-revolutionaries operating from Honduras and Costa Rica as freedom fighters leading a popular uprising against Sandinista tyranny. A special CIA report in November concluded that this was rubbish, stating that the 'contras' were incapable of achieving a political or military victory over the Nicaraguan revolution for lack of any popular support. US imperialism is therefore intensifying its open and arrogant military preparations for war against the Sandinista revolution.

Already 28 US warships and 25,000 US troops have encircled Nicaragua. 5,000 are stationed in Honduras co-ordinating with the Honduran army and up to 5,000 'contras'. In Costa Rica US Army Corps are supervising the construction of an air-strip near the Nicaraguan border capable of handling combat and troop planes. Plans also exist

for a rapid mobilisation of 25,000 Honduran, Guatemalan and Salvadoran troops to invade Nicaragua. Meanwhile, the US financed 'contras' continue their campaign of terrorism and sabotage which has cost over 1,500 Nicaraguan lives and billions of dollars to the Nicaraguan economy.

From behind this massive deployment of fire-power US imperialism is demanding that the Sandinistas 'democratise' Nicaragua. The Sandinistas are being 'told' to organise elections and share power with the 'contras' and their political representatives.

In anticipation of US imperialist aggression, the Nicaraguan people are mobilising for a popular war of national resistance. Tens of thousands of Nicaraguans are undergoing military training. Sandinista Defence Committees are organising medical and firefighting brigades in all major towns, air raid shelters and trenches are being constructed and emergency provisions are being organ-

## CENTRAL AMERICA The people prepare

ised for schools, hospitals and factories. The Sandinista government is however doing its utmost to avoid war. In an attempt to destroy any pretext for US intervention it has announced that elections will be organised in 1985, that an amnesty for counter-revolutionary prisoners is imminent, that censorship will be relaxed and that all except senior

counter-revolutionaries can return home and form political parties to participate in the elections. Though these measures allow greater room for the counter-revolutionary pro-imperialist bourgeoisie to organise, the Sandinista government is confident that the counter-revolutionaries will be rebuffed.

### El Salvador

In an important communique issued on 5 November, the FMLN General Command warned of US preparations to invade El Salvador.

'Overwhelmed by the devastating blows struck by the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front against the puppet army, especially during the last two months, the defence minister of the Salvadorean dictatorship General Eugenio Vides Casanovas, following instructions from the US government, just a few days ago asked the armies of Honduras and Guatemala to invade our country...'

The danger of such an invasion has not

receded as over the past month FMLN armed forces have continued to deliver stunning blows to the Salvadoran army. The FMLN now dominates 6 of the country's 14 provinces, they have consolidated their positions in Cabana and Cuscutlan and defeated the US inspired 'rural pacification programme' in the economically important San Vicente province.

The FMLN Communique points out the connection between US preparations to invade Nicaragua, its support for 'contras' operating from Honduras and its plans to invade El Salvador. To prepare their forces for a foreign invasion, the FMLN General Command: '...calls on the working class, the peasantry, the students, teachers, government and private employees, professionals, technicians and all their organisations to defend the homeland and be ready to struggle and resist the invaders on all fronts.'

Eddie Abrahams



# BRITISH IMPERIALISM parasitic and decaying

This article is an extract from the manifesto of the Revolutionary Communist Group The Revolutionary Road to Communism in Britain to be published in February 1984. It is taken from the section 'The crisis of British imperialism'.

A myth exists among the privileged strata of the British labour movement. It is a myth that is also peddled by most groups on the 'left' of the Labour Party. Its argument is that the decline of Britain's industrial production shows that Britain is a declining imperialist power or not even an imperialist power at all. Tony Benn has put this view, a view shared both by the Labour Party and the CPGB, most clearly of all:

**'Britain has moved from Empire to Colony status. It is a colony in which the IMF decides our monetary policy, the international and multi-national companies decided our industrial policy and the EEC decided our legislative and taxation policies.'**

Britain which has bulldozed its way through most of the oppressed nations of the world, which still brutalizes the people of its oldest colony Ireland, which is the major backer of the racist South African state and whose imperialist banks are among the most profitable in the world, is called a colony. The reality is quite different—indeed the opposite of what Tony Benn and his 'left' supporters would have us believe.

British imperialism, far from being undermined in the last 10 years, has moved from strength to strength under both Labour and Tory governments. As we have argued earlier, the fall in the rate of profit on industrial capital in the major imperialist countries has led to a rapid rise in the export of capital and an enormously strengthened role for banking capital. Imperialism's stranglehold over the oppressed nations has grown immeasurably as a result of these developments. And British imperialism, second only to the United States, has been, through its banking system, the imperialist power gaining a commanding position in this process.

Between 1972 and 1982 the rate of profit on industrial and commercial companies (excluding North Sea Oil) fell from 9.3% to 4% reaching its lowest point of 3.3% in 1981. Manufacturing profitability fell even lower to 2.3% in 1981, rising slightly to 3.3% in 1982. In the same period North Sea Oil profits have grown from an insignificant £50m to a huge £12.6bn—from a negligible proportion of gross profits of industrial and commercial companies to a massive 36.6% of the total. Meanwhile profits from overseas investment have increased from £1.7bn to nearly £11bn—equivalent to an increase from 22% to 32% when compared with the total gross profits made in Britain (including North Sea Oil).

What the figures in Table 1 show is how much British capitalism has in the last decade grown dependent on the monopoly profits from North Sea Oil and from the export of capital abroad.

The collapse of profitability in British industry has led to a rapid increase in the export of capital abroad each year. In 1972 private investors sent £1.4bn capital abroad. By 1982 this had grown to £10.8bn. The significance of this dev-

to 167% of it in 1982. Can anyone now doubt the growing strength of British banking, and hence of British imperialism?

Unfortunately, there are those on the British 'left' who do. They are forced to minimise the strength of British imperialism because they refuse to acknowledge that opportunist currents in the British labour movement are sustained and nourished through the super-profits derived from British imperialism's export of capital abroad, and particularly that sent to the oppressed nations. Such organisations inevitably play down the centrality of anti-imperialist struggles in the overall struggle for socialism world-wide. They also carry out most of their political work among the more privileged sections of the working class in the organised Labour and trade union movement seeking alliances with the more radical sectors of the labour aristocracy and its supporters.

The self-proclaimed Revolutionary

**The trends which we see emerging world-wide are deeply rooted in the contradictions of the capitalist system of production itself. The crisis of imperialism will deepen until those contradictions are resolved—until one side or the other suffers a massive defeat. Socialism or barbarism are the choices facing humanity.**  
RCG Manifesto

Communist Party, therefore, denies that UK banking assets abroad can be treated as 'assets' in the real sense at all—unlike for example the assets of an industrial company. Frank Richards goes so far along these lines as to emerge as an apologist for the imperialist banks when he says that the export of banking capital is a sign of British imperialism's weakness. This is a petty bourgeois notion of capitalism in its imperialist phase. Capitalists are concerned with profits not what their assets look like. The activities of the banks allow them to obtain an increasing share of the profits produced world-wide even though they, themselves, produce no wealth at all. Money which makes money—capital in its most parasitic form. It might not comply with the petty bourgeois vision of capitalism but, in reality, imperialist banks exercise a dominant control over capitalist society and are in the forefront of imperialism's plunder of the oppressed nations. British imperialist banks play a leading role in this process.

In the wake of the world crisis, the record level of bankruptcies in Britain and the growing threat of major defaults on international loans, the profits of the four major British banks were still a staggering £1.5bn in 1982. Although this was a fall of 10% on the record profits of the previous year, these results were achieved in spite of a massive 'bad and doubtful debt provision' of £962m—two and a half times the provision for 1981. Confidence that such high profits would be achieved in the future was shown when all the banks increased the dividends paid to shareholders—Barclays by 20%, Lloyds and NatWest by 15% and Midland by 6%. Bank share prices rose considerably.

Out of the growing world-wide poverty and starvation, the British imperialist banks continue to accumulate vast amounts of wealth. The total assets of these four banks in 1982 were £196bn, an increase of 22% on the previous year. (See Table 4)

The fifth largest British bank, Standard Chartered Bank, after doubling its bad debt provisions, reported a profit of

£242m—a fall of only 7% on the previous year. 32% of its profits came from its stake in the brutal racist South African apartheid regime. The banks are increasingly dependent on their international operations for their income and profits. In the first half of 1983, for example, NatWest overseas operations contributed a half of total company profits. For Barclays in the same period, they contributed over 40%, with nearly 40% of the profits of Barclays International coming from South Africa.

Over the last three years (1980-82) three British banks have been among the top twenty largest banks in the world. More significant is the fact that British banks have in the same period had three banks among the most profitable ten banks in the world. And in 1980 five British banks were among the top ten most profitable banks, with Barclays



Table 1

	1972	1977	1982
Rate of profit industrial and commercial companies (excl North Sea Oil)	9.3%	6.9%	4.0%
Gross trading profits (excl North Sea Oil)—£ million	7,725	16,391	21,794
North Sea Oil profits £ million	50	1,957	12,617
Profits, interest and dividends from overseas investment £million	1,748	4,032	10,991

**British terror has been unleashed all over the world since 1945: Greece, Vietnam, Palestine, India, Malaysia, Borneo, Aden, Cyprus, Suez, Indonesia, Oman, Kenya, Korea, British Cameroons, Brunei, British Guiana, Falklands/Malvinas and, of course, Ireland... British troops have been used systematically to crush any struggle for liberation from imperialism. British imperialist money, weaponry and manpower has been devoted to propping up murderous reactionary regimes and crushing resistance to such regimes. The British ruling class know that their wealth and power depend on imperialist exploitation and oppression. Therefore, they seek to drown in blood any movement of oppressed peoples for freedom.**  
RCG Manifesto

Table 2

	Gross domestic fixed capital formation £m		Private investment overseas £m	
Year	Total	Manufacturing		
1972	7,100	2,044	1,402	
1977	16,143	4,754	2,334	
1982	30,375	6,012	10,768	

Table 3 UK external assets—private sector (£ million)

	1972	% of total	1982	% of total
Private direct investment	7,860	16.1	32,500	8.5
Portfolio investment	9,490	19.4	37,700	9.9
Other direct investment (mainly oil)	2,930	6.0	16,825	4.4
UK banking and commercial claims	28,640	58.5	295,052	77.2
TOTAL	48,920		382,077	

Private direct investment—investment by UK companies in their overseas branches, subsidiaries and associates.  
Portfolio investment—investment in shares of a company which does not give a controlling interest.

Table 4 Big Four banks

	Pre-tax profit 1982 £m	Bad debt provision £m	Total assets end 1982 £bn
Barclays	495	318	59.0
NatWest	439	229	54.5
Midland	251	196	48.0
Lloyds	316	219	34.5
TOTAL	1,501	962	196.0

## Workers and oppressed peoples of all



# M capitalism

being the most profitable bank in the world in that year. Can anyone really deny the strength of the British imperialist banks?

British companies have nearly always financed the great proportion of their investment (60-70%) out of their profits from home and abroad - out of internal funds. At the height of the post-war boom the largest proportion of new *outside* finance came from money raised by the issue of shares. With the growing crisis of capitalism, the fall in the rate of profit, and the increase of inflation, companies were forced more and more to borrow from the banks. This led to a dramatic increase in British companies' dependence on banks. Between 1967 and 1973 the percentage of bank borrowings in companies' total new outside finance rose from 30% to 70%; between 1973 and 1982 it rose yet again, from

70% to 80%. The proportion of outstanding gross debt of industrial and commercial companies owed to the banks increased from 46% in 1967, 63% in 1973 to 86% in 1982. Today the hold of the banks over even large companies is greater than ever before. Banks can force companies into liquidation by restricting credits if the profit outlook of the firm does not merit further loans. Under capitalism in its imperialist phase the production of material goods is at the mercy of a handful of very powerful banks.

Britain is the major centre of international banking. Most of the important imperialist banks therefore have subsidiaries and branches in Britain. British-owned banks have about a 23% share of the London market with a similar share (22%) of the foreign currency business. Nearly 70% of Sterling lending abroad is conducted by British-owned banks. But, of course, it is the activities of all the imperialist banks in Britain (UK banks) which effect the flows of funds, profits and interest, into and out of the British economy. The growing share of banking profits as a proportion of the profits etc from overseas investment show the crucial importance of the imperialist banks based in Britain for the British economy. (See Table 5)

From 1972 to 1982 profits etc from the external lending of UK banks increased from nearly 6% of the total profits from overseas investment to a massive 24%. Can anyone really deny the crucial importance of the export of capital by UK banks for British imperialism?

The statistics for external assets of UK banks in the London market exclude the branches and subsidiaries of British-owned banks world-wide. The *Bank of England Quarterly Bulletin*, however, has published statistics for the external assets of UK registered banks including their foreign subsidiaries and branches, the vast majority of which are British-owned banks, since December 1979. From these figures we get a clearer picture of the growth of British-owned banks' external assets and their distribution world-wide. (Table 6)

Between 1979 and 1982 the external assets of UK-registered banks grew by 66% to a massive US\$169,887 million (£113,258 million) - more than twice the size of the assets from private direct investment abroad in 1982. And these figures exclude UK-registered banks overseas branches and subsidiaries' claims on local residents in local currencies on some US\$74,100 million (£49,400 million). Over 30% of assets are in the oppressed nations and more than 50% outside the imperialist bloc.

When it is remembered that oppressed nations pay higher rates of interest on their borrowing than countries in the imperialist bloc and also have to pay enormous fees to the banks for rescheduling their debts, it is clear that the

'profits' from transactions in the oppressed nations will be a major proportion of banks' overseas profits overall. British-owned banks are heavily committed in those major debtor nations so near defaulting on their debts - with outstanding claims on Mexico of US\$8,327m and Brazil of US\$7,937m. Other oppressed nations with significant debts to British banks are Argentina US\$3,347m, South Korea US\$3,060m and Venezuela US\$3,057m. British-owned banks are also the major supplier of funds to the racist South African state, their outstanding claims increasing threefold over the last three years. Can anyone still deny the importance of the assets of British banks overseas and particularly those in the oppressed nations?

The Socialist Workers Party, in an article called 'Modern Imperialism' in *Socialist Worker* 28 April 1979, not only denies the importance of the export of

**It is therefore our duty, if we wish to remain socialist, to go down lower and deeper, to the real masses; this is the whole meaning and whole purport of the struggle against opportunism.**

VI Lenin

**Table 6 External assets of UK-registered banks plus branches and subsidiaries world-wide (US\$ million)**

	Dec 1979	% of total	Dec 1982	% of total
Imperialist bloc (including offshore banking areas)	49,880	48.7	83,979	49.4
Weaker capitalist nations	8,060	7.9	15,147	8.9
South Africa	1,698	1.7	5,234	3.1
Oppressed nations	32,125	31.4	54,595	32.1
Socialist countries	9,821	9.6	9,959	5.9
Other	815	0.8	973	0.6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>102,399</b>		<b>169,887</b>	

capital to the oppressed nations but also the importance of a labour aristocracy whose existence is based on the super-profits of imperialism.

'In fact neither the export of capital nor the "superprofits" of imperialism play the role they once did... It is arguable that there has been no *net* capital export at all (to the Third World) for long periods in the recent past... Export of capital plays a vital role in modern capitalism but it is overwhelmingly export from one developed country to another. Its economic significance is entirely different... It cannot account for the "corruption" of "labour aristocracies"... by the crumbs of super-profits.'

Not only does the SWP choose to ignore the increasingly dominant role of banking capital over the last 10 years but the very *essence* of imperialism is denied.

The importance of profits from overseas investment for the strength of the British economy has already been dem-

onstrated. So has the crucial role of the imperialist banks and the export of banking capital to the oppressed nations. Recently published statistics on British direct foreign investment overseas conclusively demonstrate the overwhelming importance for British imperialism of the super-profits from overseas direct investment in the oppressed nations compared to profits from foreign direct investment overall.

**Table 7 Shares of overseas direct investment 1981 and earnings**

	Investment (£m)	% of total	Profits (£m)	% of total
EEC	805.8	15.8	446.5	12.4
Other Western Europe	138.3	2.7	193.9	5.4
North America	2,590.5	50.8	996.0	27.6
Other developed countries	395.9	7.8	375.9	10.4
South Africa	305.8	6.0	467.5	13.0
Oppressed nations:-				
Africa	243.9	4.8	266.1	7.4
Asia	281.2	5.5	462.5	12.8
Caribbean, South America, Central America	318.2	6.2	368.4	10.2
Other	24.0	0.5	28.7	0.8

In examining the distribution of foreign direct investment abroad it is also crucial to examine the distribution of the profits made from those investments. Whereas only 23% of foreign direct investment went to the oppressed nations and South Africa over 44% of earnings came from those areas. On the other hand 77% of foreign direct investment went to the imperialist bloc and other capitalist nations but only 56% of earnings came from those areas. Can anyone really deny the significance of the export of capital to the oppressed nations or the existence of the super-profits of British imperialism as the material basis for privileged strata of the working class in Britain?

Finally yet another indicator of the

parasitical character of British imperialism is Britain's 'invisible earnings' - 'earnings from the provision of services to people living abroad'. These include not only the profits etc of overseas investment discussed earlier (about a third of these earnings) but also income from activities of the City of London, insurance and other financial services, transport and shipping, royalties and consultancy earnings from overseas, and so on. Invisible earnings account for over a third of Britain's total foreign earnings (including those from exports). In 1982 they were £31,724 million. In 1981 *net* private sector invisibles contributed more than £6½bn to the balance of payments. In 1982 the figure had increased to over £7bn. More than half of this net balance came from earnings of the City of London. Britain's net invisible earnings are second only to those of the United States.

Britain is a creditor nation: its net assets in 1982 added up to £42.46bn, an increase of £11bn on the previous year, equivalent to about £2,000 per working person. As the wealth from North Sea Oil begins to dry up so British capitalism will be forced to depend more and more on the profits from its investments abroad, particularly those from its parasitic banks. A greater and greater amount of super-profits will have to be squeezed out from the oppressed peoples of the world to maintain the economic stability of imperialist Britain. British imperialism is indeed a parasitic and decaying capitalism.

In that lies its vulnerability. For as the oppressed peoples fight back and threaten the economic and political interests of British imperialism, as the wealth from North Sea Oil decreases, the British ruling class will be forced to dramatically reduce the living standards of major sections of the British working class. The conditions that have nourished and sustained privileged strata of the working class over the last 30 years in Britain will no longer exist. The domination of opportunist currents over the working class in Britain will begin to be undermined as new forces of revolution begin to emerge.

## FORTHCOMING SPRING 1984

### THE REVOLUTIONARY ROAD TO COMMUNISM IN BRITAIN

*Manifesto of the Revolutionary Communist Group*

This document has been written to show that, once again, conditions exist in Britain for the development of a revolutionary working class movement. This movement has to break with the rotten traditions of bourgeois socialism in Britain. It has to unite with the oppressed peoples in their fight to destroy imperialism and defend the socialist countries against imperialist aggression and counter-revolution. Finally it must organise politically for the overthrow of the existing social order.

160 pages. Out February 1984.

### IRELAND: KEY TO THE BRITISH REVOLUTION

*David Reed*

A working class movement from an oppressor nation which refuses to support an oppressed people fighting for the democratic right to self-determination will not be able to defend itself.

Imperialism will only be destroyed and opportunism defeated by the alliance of the British working class with the revolutionary national movement in Ireland. Ireland is the key to the British revolution.

Based on the *Communist Tradition on Ireland* series in FRFI. 450 pages. Out March 1984.

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# countries unite to destroy imperialism



# REVIEWS

## THE MAKING OF THE SECOND COLD WAR

Fred Halliday. Verso Editions  
280pp £5.95

'Adjourn Congress and run the country. Get plenty of atomic bombs on hand – drop one on Stalin, put the United Nations to work and eventually set up a free world' was US President Harry Truman's secret wish in June 1946, when the US had a complete monopoly on nuclear weapons. It was only thwarted by the growing strength of the Soviet Union, and its achievement of nuclear parity.

It is this aggressive hostility of the USA and its allies to the socialist states which has led to the nuclear arms race. In this contest the imperialist powers have always been the aggressors, and the socialist countries always on the defensive – this is the fundamental characteristic of the cold war. Despite his tendency to allocate a portion of the 'blame' for the arms race onto the USSR, Fred Halliday's *The Making of the Second Cold War* presents a wealth of evidence to show where the responsibility really lies. He quite rightly regards the Cold War as a continuation of imperialist policies which began with the armed intervention into the USSR of 14 capitalist powers from 1918-1922, shortly after the communist seizure of power in 1917. In the second imperialist world war, the Soviet Union was invaded by one imperialist power, Nazi Germany, in 1941 and lost 20m lives – the USA, which has never been invaded, has lost 1.2m citizens in all its wars since 1776.

A major strength of this book is that it shows that the cold war has always been accompanied by hot wars against the oppressed nations: an estimated 25m people have been killed in such conflicts since 1945. The US has instigated, directly organised and waged over 100 of such counter-revolutionary wars since 1945, the British over 50; while the Soviet army has been used to oppose counter-revolution only 4 times in the socialist countries (GDR 1953, Poland 1956, Hungary 1956, Czechoslovakia 1968) and only once outside (in Afghanistan 1979) – all in countries which had frontiers with the USSR. Even in the latter case, the Soviet army came to the aid of a pro-Soviet government which had already taken power – it did not, as Britain and the US have so often done, overthrow an already established government, Grenada being the most recent case. For this reason, the spending on nuclear arms and missiles by imperialist countries, though enormous, is only a small part of the total arms bill – 10% in the case of the US.

To achieve strategic parity with the USA from a national wealth of less than half that of the USA does great damage to the Soviet economy, so even without the weapons being used, arms production is part of the economic warfare against the USSR. The USSR's Warsaw pact allies are much weaker economically than the NATO countries, so overall this leads to a terrific imbalance between the world powers – not only in nuclear weapons, but in conventional weapons. NATO/USA has dozens of overseas naval bases and facilities, the USSR has no full bases and a handful of facilities; one-third of the much larger US strategic bomber fleet, each plane carrying 4 nuclear bombs, is on runway alert, as compared to none on the Soviet side.

The weak points in Halliday's analysis are his underestimation of the dynamic of the capitalist crisis, and of the importance of the NATO countries, especially Britain, in waging the cold war.

The crisis is sharpening the rivalries between the imperialist powers, yet in Halliday's view 'the one inter-capitalist war involving an advanced capitalist country – the Falklands (sic) war of April-June 1982 – was an anomaly...' (p186) It was not an anomaly, it was an anticipation of the conflicts yet to come. Halliday's picture of a 'tired and divided communist system' (p165) suffers also from his failure to see how critical the conflict between socialism and capitalism is already becoming as imperialism fights to survive.

Patrick Newman

## THE DAY AFTER

An estimated 15m people watched *The Day After*, the TV film about nuclear war. The size of the audience is a measure of the political importance of the whole issue of war, and of nuclear war in particular.

The film is very powerful, beginning in the most banal way, but culminating in the most shocking scenes of mass destruction and death. The film opens like a soap opera, with romantic images of fields, farms and barns, and clean and happy people. But instead of degenerating into a study of corporate power struggles or of someone's torrid love life, reality barges its way in as political crisis in Europe escalates into nuclear war, bringing first panic, then destruction, then fallout, disease and death on an unprecedented and unimaginable scale. As the true dimensions of nuclear war's horrific results sink in, the US President's voice reassures us that the United States has not surrendered.

The film undoubtedly helps to undermine imperialist war plans. For the first time, it will have been brought home to millions of people how total, enormous and irrevocable is the disaster which will ensue from nuclear war, pushing the human race back beyond even barbarism into total extinction.

Under imperialism the truth is subversive, and War Minister Heseltine naturally denounced this rare glimpse of it as 'unbalanced'. Yet the film made enormous concessions to imperialism. It understated the destruction, ignoring predictions that the cloud of dust thrown up by nuclear weapons will blot the sun out for 12 months, reducing temperatures to 30°C below, killing off all life except for a few



plants and insects.

There was no analysis of the political crisis which led to the war. The fact that the war 'went nuclear' because of NATO's openly avowed first strike doctrine was obscured. There was no hint that the United States is developing an armory which by the late '80s will enable it to launch a successful first strike against the Soviet Union. This 'even-handedness' obscures the fundamental fact that it is

imperialism which thrives on war and threatens humankind.

The film also encourages an appalling sense of pessimism and helplessness. We are seriously expected to believe that a political crisis of this kind could develop into nuclear war without stimulating political opposition. In the film, the first time people really start to take nuclear war seriously is after it has begun – when they see the US missiles soaring skywards. If that were really so, then the future would be impossibly bleak. However, the imperialist military build-up, and blatant contempt for human life in Ireland, Grenada, Lebanon etc is driving thousands to oppose the war drive.

By contrast, the discussion following the film was simply ridiculous. Heseltine, who is too gutless to debate with anyone who disagrees with him, put on a sham-bolic performance which was one of the most convincing arguments for unilateral nuclear disarmament to be seen in a long time. Two former Labour war ministers Denis Healey and David Owen tried to explain their silly little plans for stopping nuclear war from breaking out, without doing away with nuclear weapons. MacNamara, mass murderer of the Vietnamese people, got plenty of air time to do the same. We had to suffer a top US warmonger – by satellite. The audience discussion was laughable – almost as soon as an ordinary person started to speak, they were shut up. The only person allowed to support unilateral nuclear disarmament was Joan Ruddock of CND. No comment, of course, was solicited from anyone from the Soviet Union. No reason therefore for Heseltine to complain about lack of balance here!

Steve Palmer

## CLASS AND COLOUR IN SOUTH AFRICA 1850-1950

Jack and Ray Simons.  
International Defence and Aid  
702pp £5.00



'British and colonial troops made war on the Hlubi in 1873, the Gcaleka and Pedi in 1877, the Ngqika, Themba, Pondo, Griqua and Rolong in 1878, the Zulu in 1879, the Sotho in 1880, the Ndebele in 1893, and the Afrikaner republics in 1899. The Cape (British controlled – GW) absorbed the Transkei and its peoples in 1879-94. Britain annexed Basutoland in 1868, Griqualand West in 1871, the South African Republic in 1877, Zululand in 1887, Matabeleland in 1894, and the Afrikaner republics in 1900. The Zulu rebellion of 1906, in which nearly 4,000 Africans were killed, marked the last stage in 250 years of armed struggle by the traditional societies against white invaders.'

As in Ireland, Palestine and Asia, so in South Africa British imperialism baptized the people in blood and subjugated small nations.

African peasants made landless by British inspired wars, conquests and annexations, were the cheap labour fed to the diamond and gold industries. The 1872 diamond digging proclamation by the British governor of the Cape laid the basis of the pass laws of today. The confinement of African workers in closed compounds was pioneered by the arch imperialist Cecil Rhodes in the 1880s, and the industrial colour bar was developed in the 1890s. The British developed the bloody record of annually killing 79 Africans per 1,000 in the Kimberley diamond diggings, and 69 per 1,000, from disease alone, in the Rand mines. Such super exploitation produced super profits for the coffers of British governors, and massive corporations such as De Beers Consolidated Mines.

Following the Boer war the victorious

British directed increased repression against Africans. Wages were driven down. The Native Labour Regulation Act of 1911 perpetuated indentured labour and inflicted a penal code on Africans. The Immigrants Restriction Act of 1911 restricted the movement of Indians, the Native Land Act of 1913 was designed to restrict 4m black people to 8% of the land, whilst 1½m whites got 92% of the land. The Mines and Works Act of 1911 intensified job reservation. Who can deny that at the heart of apartheid lies British imperialism?

As black people were driven lower and lower the resultant super profits enabled British imperialism to create a privileged aristocratic white labour movement which was a staunch pillar and architect of apartheid. The lure of wealth attracted thousands of Europeans, many claiming to be staunch trade unionists and ardent socialists – but for whites only.

As early as 1907 the president of Johannesburg Trades Council demanded Africans be confined to reserves. It was the South African Labour Party which was opposed to black people being included in industrial conciliation procedures. In 1909 Labour politicians were the first to propose racial segregation in factories, and it was Labour politicians who fell over themselves in eagerness to claim that they were the first to demand the separation of races throughout the land, ie apartheid. Therefore during the Rand Revolt of 1922 trade unionists fought under the banner 'For a white South Africa'. Post 1945 Labour candidates advocated stricter pass laws, 9pm curfew for all Africans and public lynchings! Finally, the Suppression of Communism Act received the full support of the bulk of the white labour movement. The president of the South African Federation of Trade Unions congratulated delegates for not defending communism and those who advocated equality between races.

In the early part of the century the forces claiming to be revolutionary socialists were nothing more than the radical wing of the white labour movement. So in the 1922 Rand Revolt the South African Communist Party (SACP) marched behind the banner 'Workers of the world, Fight and Unite for a White South Africa' and the police auxiliaries were hailed 'Red Guards of the Rand'. They thought that the struggle for the rights of black people sidetracked from the 'real' class struggle between the white worker and capitalist. Black people would have to wait for the advent of socialism, won by the labour aristocrats, before they could have their demands for equality dealt with: just as today in Britain middle class socialists believe that the labour aristocratic trade

union movement will lead the revolution in Britain. Unable to see why the ruling class needed a labour aristocracy, early communists disregarded the justice and significance of the demands for political equality. As a result these radicals were largely isolated from the aristocratic labour movement because of their association with communism, and isolated from black people because of their racism.

In 1928, at the behest of the Third International as well as from the pressure of the black workers in South Africa, the SACP was forced to accept the principal of black majority rule. Many whites left the party claiming that the blacks were not yet ready to assume leadership. The SACP started to formulate its position on the national liberation of black people in South Africa as the necessary first stage to the achievement of a classless society. There were nevertheless struggles within the SACP between those who refused to credit the possibility of majority African rule and those like La Guma who stressed the centrality of the national struggle and the need for work amongst the most oppressed, and who described the white labour movement as obtaining its privileges and concessions at the expense of Africans. Communists organised African trade unions throughout the 1920s, formed the South African Federation of Non-European Trade Unions in 1928. By this time the SACP had 1,600 African members out of a total membership of 1,750.

The 7th annual conference of the SACP eventually adopted a clause on 'self-determination of the African peoples'. Simons and Simons describe the political gains of the conference:

'Real labour unity could be achieved, according to the programme, only when Africans had been liberated from subjection. Nothing less than a democratic revolution would destroy racial discrimination, abolish feudal relationships, and enable Africans to develop a national identity. A democratic society under African rule would lead to the abolition of class exploitation, socialism, and rule by workers and peasants. Racial emancipation and class exploitation coincided. The party's immediate task was therefore to remove all racial disabilities; restore lands and liberties seized by foreign conquerors; vindicate the principle of equality, independence and self-determination... The removal of racial discrimination in all its forms was now seen as a precondition for the building of a classless society. White workers were invited to abandon their role as a "tinsel aristocracy", doomed to be either helpless or treacherous in the class struggle; and to support the

## PREPARING FOR POWER

Programme of the RCP, 44pp,  
30p

This pamphlet displays all the characteristics of the RCP's middle class socialism: denial of the revolutionary role of black workers; denial of the reactionary role of the labour aristocracy; anti-Sovietism and sectarianism.

Black workers appear only as 'victims' – victims to be protected by 'organised workers'. 'Only organised workers have the power to run racist thugs off the streets' (p27). The revolutionary role of black workers is ignored and reality itself denied. Thus in the 'present period' there has been no 'serious working class revolt against the capitalist order' (p9). In fact, the most serious working class revolt was that of black youth, and white working class youth, in 1981. This revolt, as far as the RCP are concerned, was clearly not part of the working class struggle.

As is the way with Trotskyists the labour aristocracy is transformed into something called the labour bureaucracy. The central fact that this layer is a product of imperialism and is the agent of imperialism in the working class movement is thus obscured and, therefore, effectively denied.

The RCP's anti-Sovietism becomes ever more rampant. '... the Soviet Union is a travesty of communism, ... the October Revolution has been overturned into a system of bureaucratic oppression' (p34). With the strange and perverted logic of Trotskyism the RCP end their slanderous attack on the Soviet Union by saying 'No to anti-Soviet hysteria! Who can make sense of this?'

Sectarianism is best revealed in the RCP's attack on the peace movement. Ignoring the variety of trends and forces in this movement, the RCP condemns it as a weapon of the European bourgeoisie against the US (p33). The fact that Heseltine is itching to shoot peace campaigners passes the RCP by.

This pamphlet is, in fact, devoted to the organised Labour and trade union movement and therefore the more privileged sections of the working class. Trade unions get a chapter, Ireland gets half a page. The anti-Sovietism, the rejection of the revolutionary role of black workers, the cover-up of the labour aristocracy and the sectarian attack on the peace movement are all geared to the prejudices of this layer. It is not a revolutionary programme. Whatever the RCP is preparing for, it is not, fortunately, power.

Terry Marlowe

demand for African power – the only practical road to workers' power.'

The development of this position meant working in unity with the organisations of the liberation movement such as the African National Congress (ANC), which black people, facing brutal oppression and abandoned by the aristocratic labour movement, were forced to organise to assert their rights.

So in the foreword to the book the authors correctly contend

'where class divisions tend to coincide with antagonistic national or colour groups, the class struggle merges with the struggle for national liberation.

In the fight against imperialism this book shows that to stand at the forefront of the class struggle means standing at the forefront of the struggle for national liberation. The position of the SACP on the primacy of the national struggle brought it into the front line of the struggle against imperialism, and made the SACP a revolutionary organisation. The book is essential reading as an expose of British imperialism, and as an aid to the deeper understanding of the role of the labour aristocracy. For those wishing to build an anti-imperialist movement in this country the book traces the development of principled alliances between different political forces. In South Africa the result was the Congress Alliance – a formidable revolutionary mass movement. To build such a force in this country demands we learn the lessons brought out by this book.

Gordon Walton



## BRAZIL

# RUIN OR REVOLUTION

'Everyone knows that Brazil is not going to pay its debts'. Elio Gaspari, columnist *Journal do Brasil*

In October 1983 representatives of US and British imperialist banks, the IMF and the new governor of the Brazilian Central Bank travelled half-way round the world to scrape together the \$6.5bn rescue package necessary to prevent an immediate default on Brazil's staggering \$90bn debt. They personally contacted over half Brazil's 830 creditor banks in a period of ten days. The bankers were told they had no choice. Brazil had to be bailed out or the international banking system faced possible collapse. Nevertheless the response was slow. It was only after the Brazilian Congress had passed a new wages law on 9 November that commitments to contribute to a new loan came rushing in. The people were being squeezed further so the imperialist bankers would get back their profits.

It took the longest session of the Brazilian Congress in memory and the skill of surgeons to prolong the life of the chairman of the senate Nilo Coelho to get the approval of a new law to restrict wage rises to 87% of the cost of living — that is, to reduce the wages of the vast majority of the Brazilian working class. The bill was passed just before dawn after 231 opposition members walked out of the Congress. The bill got 245 votes, a handful above the 240 minimum required to get it passed. Nilo Coelho was kept alive for an extra few hours on the operating table until the bill was passed. Should he have died before the vote had been taken

the session of the Brazilian Congress would have been automatically suspended. Such is the extent of the crisis of the international banking system that the timing of one man's death played its role in staving off the day of reckoning.

For the Brazilian people there is no such respite. The \$6.5bn loan — the largest international credit ever assembled — was part of an \$11bn IMF organised rescue package. The condition for it being granted was an 'austerity' programme imposed on the Brazilian people. By late 1982 41% of the population earned less than the minimum wage, defined as the minimum necessary to support a family

of four. 10m people earned less than half the minimum wage. Matters will get much worse. In 1983 national income will decline by 6.6% — the worst year in Brazil for half a century. Inflation is currently running at 200%.

The impact of the imperialist banks on the people of Brazil is vividly portrayed by their effect on the country's children. The *International Herald Tribune* recently spoke of the 'abandoned children of an entire continent [Latin America], a ragged army of as many as 40 million youngsters on an aimless march that never gets past the margins of civilised life'. They can be seen in every town and city across Latin America. 'By night they sleep wrapped in newspapers, stretched out in doorways, littered alleys and discarded construction tubing...' They stave off starvation in any way they can. Every month in Brazil more than 100 infants are left in police stations, hospitals and on the streets by desperate mothers. It is estimated that there are 2m abandoned children in Rio de Janeiro and 2.5m in Sao Paulo. Only some 1% of these receive assistance from government agencies. These children are officially anonymous, beginning life with no birth certificate and ending up in an unnamed pauper's grave. Little wonder that 80% of the prison population in Brazil is made up of former street children.

The IMF austerity package will further devastate the country and it will not even solve any long-term problems for the imperialist banks. Brazil is on the road to ruin. It can never pay back its ever-growing debts. The imperialists fully understand this and are looking for new methods to get back their profits. The president of the Bank of International Settlements is leading the way. 'Countries should sell their national assets to their creditors'. Having forced the oppressed nations to mortgage their wealth to the imperialist banks, the imperialists are now saying it's time to call in their assets.

State-owned firms, state industry and mining, in other words the wealth of these countries, should now be handed over lock, stock and barrel to the imperialists in order to reduce their debts.

The people, however, are fighting back. They will not allow the wealth of their countries to be given away to the imperialists. The wealth belongs to the people. The writing is on the wall. In the first 8 days of September in Rio de Janeiro 30 supermarkets, bakeries and pharmacies were sacked by people in search of food and medicine. The police are out on the streets in force. They have been attacked by people with guns. The government has been forced to extend the emergency measures, introduced while Congress was discussing the new wage law, for 60 days. These measures ban public meetings and allow house searches and arrests. The government is under threat. The IMF 'austerity' programme has confronted the people with the stark choice — ruin or revolution. The people have shown they will fight to survive.

David Reed

## ARMS RACE SPEEDS UP

The arrival of cruise missiles at Greenham Common and the West German Bundestag's decision to deploy Pershing II and cruise missiles have pushed the world onto yet another lap in the arms race. This is the culmination of three years of manoeuvring, lies and deceit by the imperialists in an attempt to gain military superiority over the socialist countries.

NATO's original moves in 1977 to deploy cruise and Pershing missiles had nothing to do with the state of the Soviet armoury, and were based on the argument that there was a gap in NATO's weapons that needed modernising. A NATO report states that:

'NATO doctrine requires the capability to strike the Soviet Union with systems based in Europe. Existing capabilities, all based in the United Kingdom, were ageing and were in need of replacement. Modernisation was required irrespective of Soviet capabilities.'

At that time there was no mention of the Soviet SS20 missiles as a reason for modernisation.

**'NATO's nuclear systems based in Europe... are concrete evidence of the nature of the American commitment. They are a concrete manifestation of NATO's willingness to resort to nuclear weapons if necessary'. (A Haig, April 1982, ex Secretary of State and ex Head of NATO forces)**

On 12 December 1979 NATO took its infamous 'twin track' decision — to go ahead with deployment, while engaging in arms control talks. These talks were an afterthought, a public relations exercise contrived to demonstrate 'Soviet intransigence' in order to disorient opposition to deployment. Cruise and Pershing, we were now told, were being deployed to counter SS20 missiles which created a nuclear imbalance in Europe.

This imbalance is a total lie. First, the imperialists count only land-based mis-

siles, leaving out US, British and French submarine based missiles (some 912 warheads). Secondly, they count only missiles with a range greater than 625 miles. This leaves out the Pershing IA (180 warheads) not to mention many other land-based and tactical missiles. Thirdly, the imperialists leave out nuclear capable aircraft (587 bombs). After excluding most of their own weapons, the imperialists then have the nerve to say they are defenceless against the Soviet Union! In fact there is a rough parity in nuclear delivery systems when all are included.

Basing himself on the supposed imbalance, Reagan proposed his so-called 'Zero option' in November 1981 — no new US missiles would be deployed if the Soviet Union scrapped all its mis-

siles. This was a call for the USSR to disarm whilst the imperialists kept British and French missiles, and all their aircraft! — a call supported by the British middle class left with their slogan 'no cruise no SS20s'.

The Soviet Union, by contrast, has offered to scrap all but 140 SS20s and proposed equalising the number of aircraft at a much lower level than at present provided cruise and Pershing are not deployed. This would bring about equality in delivery systems at a lower

## BANGLADESH upsurge of struggle

Following the very widespread and mass protests against the Zia regime in Pakistan Bangladesh has seen a renewed upsurge of struggle against the equally brutal and corrupt dictatorship of Lieutenant General Ershad.

Only days before the royal parasites, the Queen and Prince Philip, were due to parade around Bangladesh oozing 'concern' for starving and malnourished Bangladeshi children, opposition forces launched a campaign aimed at smashing 20 months of martial law. More than 5,000 marched in the capital city Dacca, while in northern Bangladesh a six hour general strike was declared and angry people stoned a cabinet minister's car. Ershad's police and army, trained by Britain, arrested hundreds and dispensed violent beatings to protesters.

As in Pakistan, the grinding poverty and state of permanent near-starvation is forcing millions of people to struggle in order to survive. Bangladesh has for over two centuries been under the colonial and neo-colonial domination of British imperialism. As a direct result it is now the world's second poorest country. Over 80% of the population live in the most dire and terrible poverty, while



British multinationals, banks, and drug companies reap literally enormous profits. A recent TV report on the British-owned tea plantations in Bangladesh showed how diseases such as leprosy, diarrhoea, TB and malnutrition were rife among the tea workers and their children. These British companies showed not the slightest concern to even provide clean water and adequate medical facilities.

Despite Ershad's repression, even larger protests took place at the end of November. In Dacca 25,000 people stormed the government secretariat. Street meetings and smaller demonstrations were held in many localities of the city. The offices of a student campaign supporting Ershad were burnt. Protest also erupted in the city of Chittagong.

Ershad has responded by banning all political activity and imposing a curfew in Dacca. 6 people have died in police firings; a further 630 detained and hundreds more injured in police teargassing and baton charges. This savage repression has not however sapped the strength of the growing movement against Ershad. A general strike was soon mounted to protest at these barbaric attacks on unarmed people.

Bill Hughes

level. These proposals have been rejected by the imperialists who are only interested in gaining military superiority over the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union has therefore refused to bow to imperialist pressure. They have withdrawn from the Geneva talks, since their continuation would only serve as a cover for the actions of the imperialists. Secondly, the Warsaw Pact countries have agreed to deploy new missiles to counter the new threat in GDR, Czechoslovakia, and in the sea off the United States. The USSR has stated nevertheless that if the imperialists are prepared to return to the situation before deployment, the Soviet Union is prepared to do the same.

Steve Palmer

## in brief

### ● Repression of Tamils continues

2,000 Tamil women, children and men brutally murdered, 10,000 Tamil homes burnt, 200,000 refugees, 52 political prisoners slaughtered and £230m of Tamil property destroyed were the results of the July 1983 racist massacre of Tamil-speaking people in Sri Lanka. Since these terrible events, the press and governments of the imperialist countries have remained silent. Yet, the relentless repression and genocidal attacks on the Tamil people have continued virtually unabated.

Since the 'July Massacre', the traditional homelands of the Tamil nation in the north and east of Sri Lanka have become the target of intensified Sinhalese colonisation programmes, making the Tamils a minority in their own areas. Tamils are being forced to leave their lands or face murder and atrocities at the hands of the government security forces.

Since September 4 and 5, the Tamil Batticaloa district has been invaded by between 35,000 and 50,000 Sinhalese, who have seized many Tamil villages by force. A similar invasion has taken place in Panikulam in Trincomalee district, led by a Sri Lanka government Cabinet Minister.

The racist settlement programmes in Tamil lands have coincided with recent manoeuvres and schemes by US imperialism, which has long sought after Trincomalee Harbour as a naval base of prime strategic importance. US Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger visited Sri Lanka in September. It has now been reported that a US company can use Trincomalee Harbour for 'oil storage purposes'. So the new Voice of America radio transmitters have been installed in Sri Lanka.

The British advertising companies Saatchi and Saatchi, have helped the racist Sri Lankan government by launching a £50,000 campaign in Britain aimed at concealing its true face of that of a terrorist and murderer of Tamil people. Glossy colour booklets are being sent to MPs and Lords. Unconfirmed reports state that 600 Sri Lankan security personnel have arrived in Britain for training.

Further information can be obtained by writing to the Eelam Solidarity Campaign, PO Box 318, London NW1 8HS.

Bill Hughes

### ● Free the Iran-Air 10

On Monday 7 November, ten Iranian student supporters of the Organisation of Iranian People's Fedail Guerrillas peacefully occupied the offices of Iran Air in London as part of an international day of protest, to highlight the barbaric state of repression and torture existing in Iran under the regime of the Islamic Republic.

This occupation successfully achieved its aim of drawing public attention to the atrocities of a regime which, in the last 2 years, has executed 20,000 revolutionaries and progressives and which has incarcerated 100,000 in its jails, where they face torture far more severe than under the Shah.

The students demanded that human rights organisations, such as the Red Cross and Amnesty International, be allowed to visit Iran's political prisoners and be allowed to visit the war torn regions of Iranian Kurdistan, where, since 1979, 15,000 people, most of them women and children, have been killed in the regime's war against the Kurdish movement for autonomy and democracy. The students further demanded a complete end to western arms deals and shameful economic support for the Islamic Republic.

Despite the peaceful character of the protest, the ten students arrested have amazingly been denied bail and face potentially severe charges (while students engaged in similar action abroad have already been freed) and even the threat of deportation.

In order to combat this potentially dangerous threat not only to the ten students concerned, but to all Iranian progressives, we call on all British democrats and socialists to support the newly set up Iran Air 10 Support Committee. In the short term please ask your MP, councillor or MP to demand that the police justify the refusal of bail.

Iran Air 10 Support Committee  
BM KAR London WC1N 3XX  
for further information tel: 01 349 3312



# PRISONERS FIGHT BACK

## Albany and Wormwood Scrubs: the battle continues

Following the historic victory in the High Court on 8 November when prisoners won the possibility of legal representation in internal disciplinary hearings (see FRFI 34), the Home Office finally conceded defeat as far as internal proceedings are concerned. Leon Brittan has announced that all mutiny charges against Albany prisoners have been dropped. This means that the convictions already made are overturned along with the punishments and the other cases will not be proceeded with.

This is, indeed, a historic victory against the Home Office victimisation machine. Step by step the Home Office was forced into this final admission of defeat in the face of organised political and legal resistance by prisoners and their supporters. Once again FRFI sends its warmest congratulations to all those involved.

However, the Home Office has announced one final effort to 'get' the Albany prisoners: a police inquiry into events in the prison. Such an inquiry could lead to criminal charges, especially the notorious 'conspiracy' charge: the final resort of the ruling class against its enemies. This police inquiry certainly will have nothing to do with the truth about the Albany protest. No prisoner has any interest in co-operating with this inquiry. Nor can any prisoner be obliged to co-operate with it.

To complete the Albany victory what is needed is not a police inquiry but an

independent public enquiry such as PROP has recently called for. FRFI fully supports this demand. The task now is to prevent any possibility of criminal charges being laid against protesting prisoners and to expose the intolerable and repressive prison conditions which are the real cause of the Albany protest. FRFI says:

No police inquiry!  
For an Independent Public Inquiry!  
Terry O'Halloran

## Letter from a prisoner

Dear FRFI,

I read with interest the letters written by Irish freedom fighters in regard to the so-called riot in Albany Prison on the Isle of Wight. The riot as they call it (POA - Prison Officers Association) was a fight for better conditions and a stop to the menial and degrading practice of being forced to sew 'mail bags', and not being given the opportunity of doing work which is not designed to take away 'pride' and self 'respect'.

Though numerous complaints were lodged against this practice, the only result was a loss of earnings. So the only course left open to the inmates was the action they took, which shows the only thing which is understood in this tyrannical and suppressive system is 'violence'. It should be noted that no 'political prisoners' took part in this action until they were asked to do so, leaving the imperialist government of this country no reason to say that it was an IRA controlled act.

Up to this point I have been in the segregation unit for five months, awaiting trial. A trial where I have no right to legal repre-

sentation, in a system that acts as 'judge', 'jury' and 'executioner'. What punishment do these people plan to force upon me? As I have been charged with Mutiny who knows?

Here I am in a non-military establishment, under a charge which is still in the 'Armed Forces' book of discipline, and this system and the hypocritical government state 'that they are only trying to rehabilitate me, and to release me as a law abiding citizen'.

I myself was attacked by members of the MUFTI Squad. It was a barbaric and totally unprecedented assault, as I was offering no resistance and definitely not behaving in an aggressive manner. Because of this vicious and brutal attack I received horrendous injuries which consisted of severe bruising of the left side of my body, my left eye was bruised to such an extent that I was barely able to see for a considerable period, and I was hospitalised for fourteen days.

These are the outward signs, but what are the mental injuries I have received? And in what way will it affect my life as a result of this savage attack. This is my own experience, but what of the others? What are the injuries of those who are fighting two battles for freedom, 'the freedom of their country' and the freedom every prisoner wants.

I hope this gives a bit of encouragement to all participants in their struggle for freedom, and the right to be treated as human beings instead of animals. They may break bones, but they will never break spirits, because we are involved in a just action.

Anthony Loughran

## £246 million: the price of repression

As the imperialist crisis deepens and poverty and repression increase, so the British state is taking steps to prepare for any fight back or resistance from the working class and oppressed. Recent uncovering of stockpiling in London of 10,000 plastic bullets with a further 10,000 in other parts of the country is evidence of this preparation. Further evidence came during the last month when the Home Secretary, Leon Brittan, announced a massive prison building plan to be completed by 1991, which it is estimated will cost £246.2 million.

Ten new gaols are planned to be opened in the next eight years, providing 4,800 new prison places. These will be at Wayland, near Norfolk; Stocken Hall, Leicester; Apple Thorn for young prisoners, Cheshire; Bovingdon, Hertfordshire; Gayneshall, Cambridgeshire; Swaleside, Kent; Garth in Lancashire; Featherstone, Staffordshire and a new local prison for London at Woolwich which will cost an estimated £35 million and accommodate 770 prisoners. Money will also be spent on redeveloping and extending existing prisons giving 4,400 new places; and a further four new prisons providing 1,812 places at Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire; Bicester, Oxfordshire; March, Cambridgeshire and Lancaster, Lancashire, will bring the total to over 10,600 new prison places.

The Home Office will be the only Whitehall department to expand over the next four years directly as a result of the prison building programme. Of the extra 5,500 prison staff to be recruited

by 1988, 5,000 will be prison officers, 2,000 of whom will be needed to staff the new prisons and courts.

Brittan announced that 'this programme of new prison building far surpasses anything undertaken before in this century'. It undoubtedly does. And it is no surprise that the imperialist British state whilst cutting social services, housing and education for the working class, unemployed and youth, and destroying the national health service, is putting millions of pounds into building hell-holes to incarcerate anyone who resists this savage onslaught.

Within the prison building plan no resources are being put into improving the appalling conditions in the older, Victorian prisons and Brittan has said that modernisation of these buildings will be a 'slow, long and very expensive process'. Prisoners will continue to suffer from overcrowding, poor sanitation, cold damp cells and spending 23 out of 24 hours locked up.

Alexa Byrne

## HOME OFFICE REVENGE

The Home Office is exacting its revenge against protesting prisoners by condemning many of them to solitary confinement. Licking its wounds from its public defeat, the Home Office, like a cornered rat, is striking out at the prisoners involved.

**Tony Clarke** Irish POW, is in solitary in Manchester Strangeways prison. He is locked up 24 hours a day except for exercise - one hour 'depending on weather conditions'. He is forbidden to communicate with any other prisoners - that is to say a 'Silence' regime. His visits are all specially secure closed visits under conditions so intolerable that he is refusing to accept any more visits. He has a red light burning 24 hours causing severe and continuous headache. He has been in solitary since May - over six months.

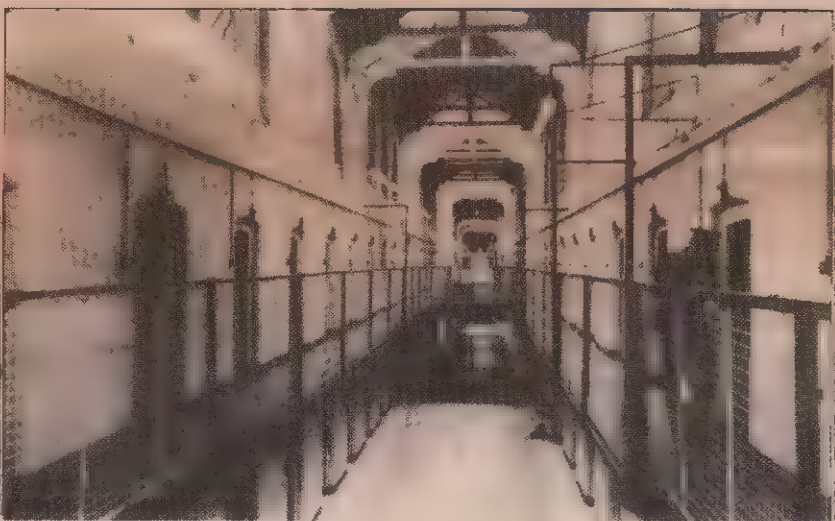
**Steve Blake** Irish POW, was held in a strip cell in Walton prison Liverpool from 20 May to 26 August. His clothes, marked with patches, were taken off him every night. Locked up 24 hours except exercise. Steve Blake says that while he was there Joseph Keating committed suicide, on 30 May, as a result of such conditions. Steve Blake is now in solitary in F Wing Wakefield. He is also under the 'Silence' rule. He is forced to shower in full view of prison officers. He has been in solitary since 20 May -

over six months.

**Jimmy Anderson** English prisoner, is in solitary in Wandsworth. He is being denied books and papers. He has recently been ordered to have no contact with FRFI. Mrs Anderson described him as 'grey', 'trembling' and 'nervous' as a result of his continued isolation. Jimmy Anderson has been in solitary since 16 June - over five months.

**Ray McLaughlin** Irish POW, is in solitary in F Wing Wakefield. Ray McLaughlin was transferred out of Albany before the protest. He was never charged with any offence. Before and after every visit he is strip-searched and has his anus probed. His wife is refusing visits under these inhuman conditions. Ray is due for release on 28 December having won back remission lost after the Hull protest 1976 (see FRFI 34). The prison authorities hope that they can provoke Ray and thus take away his remission again. He has been in solitary since May - over six months.

**Charles McGhee** long-term prisoner, was acquitted of mutiny in an



Inside Wormwood Scrubs: the prisoners fight on

internal hearing yet remains in solitary. He has been in solitary since May - over six months.

**Paul Norney** Irish POW, is in solitary in a strip cell in Durham. The cell has no furniture except a mattress at night. Even during exercise he is kept isolated from all other prisoners. He has been in solitary since May - over six months.

Paul Hill (Strangeways), Eddie O'Neill (Brixton), Michael Jamieson (Brixton), Alex McPhee (Wandsworth) and Tony Loughran (Wandsworth) are known to be in solitary confinement - all over six months.

This use of solitary confinement and the apparent creeping re-introduction of elements of the control unit regime - such as the 'Silence' rule - are evidence that the Home Office will do what it can to get revenge against the prisoners in an effort to break resistance in the prisons. FRFI has no doubt that the prisoners will resist this barbarity. We call on all readers to demand the immediate release from solitary of all these prisoners by writing to Leon Brittan, The Home Office, Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1.

Prisoners out of solitary!  
Victory to the prisoners!

Terry O'Halloran

## LEBANON

### The imperialists dig in

continued from page 1

further retaliation unless President Assad submits and indeed while 'negotiations' continue, Syrian positions are being regularly bombarded from the biggest array of US naval forces since the Second World War.

Imperialist plans range even wider. With PLO forces about to leave Tripoli, US and Israeli forces are preparing to escort the puppet President Gemayel's troops into the town and thus extend his fascist fiefdom. With the PLO effectively removed from Lebanon reaction can turn its energy to the destruction of the remaining progressive and anti-imperialist forces in the country - the Progressive Socialist Party, the Amal, the Lebanese Communist Party, the Organisation of Communist Action and others. The US-Israeli agreement has given Israel added confidence to continue consolidating its occupation of South Lebanon. Constituting a third of the country, South Lebanon has been virtually sealed off by the Zionists who are escalating repression and destroying the local economy. While Israeli agricultural and other imports are tax free, Lebanese farmers are being denied access to their major market - Beirut.

Reactionary Arab regimes are exploiting the difficult position of the revolutionary forces to further undermine the PLO. King Hussein of Jordan is planning to reconvene the Jordanian Parliament which has formal jurisdiction over the West Bank but was disbanded after the Zionist occupation in 1967. He hoped to use it to negotiate on behalf of the Palestinian people thus challenging the PLO's position as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. On the other hand, the Syrian regime, despite its rhetoric and definite differences with US imperialism and Israel, is pressing ahead its plan to transform the PLO into an impotent puppet organisation. After having orchestrated civil war within Al Fatah, the PLO's largest organisation, Syria has now turned on the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP). Both organisations actually oppose Arafat's current political stand but have refused to become Syrian stooges. As a result their newspapers have been banned, their militants' movement restricted and their guerilla fighters have been blocked from undertaking military operations against Israel.

British imperialism is playing a full and active role in the imperialist offensive. Despite apparently serious tactical differences with the US over the latter's bombing raids, the British government has backed the USA's right to launch such attacks and has declared that British troops will remain in Lebanon. In addition, the British government hosted President Gemayel during his December visit to London and assured him of continuing support. While in London Gemayel, a fascist, also met Labour Party leaders, including Neil Kinnock, who have persistently refused to meet or recognise the PLO.

The US-Israeli agreement is a harbinger of mighty dangers facing the Lebanese, Palestinian and Arab masses. They are fighting back - in Beirut, the Shouf, occupied South Lebanon and the West Bank - with increasing popular protests and guerilla operations. Revolutionaries in Britain have a duty to stand with this resistance and demand the immediate withdrawal of all imperialist forces from the region.

Eddie Abrahams

## FRFI FOR PRISONERS

FRFI needs your help. We need your money to carry on the political service we provide to prisoners. There are many political prisoners and others who are becoming political in British prisons. They have a right to read FRFI and other political literature.

FRFI is already sent free of charge to over 50 prisoners, and more are added each week to the list. In addition, FRFI provides many prisoners with books, pamphlets and other material they cannot easily obtain.

We appeal to all our readers to help us continue providing these necessary political services. Please send us a donation. You can send £4 to cover an FRFI subscription for a prisoner, or any donation large or small. Please rush your donation to:

FRFI  
Box 5509  
London WC1H 3XX.

Cheques and postal orders payable to Larkin Publications.



# SINN FEIN - ARD FHEIS

On Thursday 8 December James Prior called on Sinn Fein to choose between the ballot box and the gun. Prior was attempting to use the electoral success of Sinn Fein as a basis for counterposing a legal 'constitutional' Sinn Fein to an illegal 'unconstitutional' IRA. There can be no doubt that such manoeuvring will fail in the face of revolutionary nationalist resistance.

However, Prior's hypocritical demand reflects growing attempts by bourgeois and opportunist forces to use the very success of Sinn Fein as a means of undermining the revolutionary nationalist strategy of the Republican Movement. The pressure from these forces takes a variety of forms: the alleged conflict between the military and political struggle; the demand to abandon abstentionism; the demand to restrict Republican campaigning in the Twenty Six Counties to purely 'constitutional' and 'respectable' limits. In grappling with these problems of success, the recent Ard Fheis revealed differences of view on the way forward especially on the question of abstentionism.

A motion from Galway reaffirming the ban on discussion of abstentionism in relation to imperialist imposed parliaments - Leinster House, the Assembly and Westminster - was defeated by 180 votes to 140. Although the discussion was only about allowing discussion, it is clear that the decisions of the Ard Fheis mark the first major questioning of abstentionism. Abstentionism - the refusal to recognise the legitimacy of British-imposed parliaments by refusing to take seats in them - was central to the 1969/70 split between the revolutionary nationalists who formed the Provisionals and the revisionist Officials. Now, within the Provisionals, that position is no longer regarded as beyond

question. The Ard Fheis also decided to allow successful Sinn Fein candidates in the EEC elections to take their seats 'under the guidance of the ard comhairle'.

The question of the way forward in



the Twenty Six Counties was also an important issue. Gerry Adams devoted

much of his keynote speech to the issue. he argued that Sinn Fein had to relate to people in ways they could understand and that Sinn Fein had to make clear that:

'... republicans are not interested in armed struggle in a twenty-six county context aimed at the takeover of the state.'

He called, instead, for a 'planned offensive at the ballot box'.

In another discussion the issue of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) was raised. The ICTU was condemned for failing to defend the working class but at the same time it was decided to ensure that Sinn Fein made effective intervention in the trade union movement aimed at returning the movement to the policies of Connolly.

All of these issues concern the way forward in the Twenty Six Counties. The Free State has established a powerful and influential layer of opportunist and bourgeois nationalist forces, including the ICTU, which act to protect and defend the neo-colonial regime. These forces - the partitionist bloc - exposed

their treacherous character during the hunger strike. The lesson of the hunger strike was that these forces cannot be won to the revolutionary national struggle.

Other forces, however, do exist in the Twenty Six Counties: the forces of the dispossessed, the poor, the unemployed, the lowest layers of the Irish working class. During the hunger strike, the Dublin youth, showed how these forces identified with the revolutionary national struggle and linked the neo-colonial regime with its imperialist masters in the slogan 'Gardai - RUC'.

As Sinn Fein sets out to apply the decisions of the Ard Fheis in the context of growing economic and social crisis in the Twenty Six Counties, the question who can be relied upon will become decisive. As the Republican Movement gains ground all the fiercer will be Free State repression against it. However, the success of the revolutionary nationalist struggle will be guaranteed once the forces of the dispossessed in the south are joined with the risen people of the north.

Terry Marlowe

## Irish Solidarity Movement

The Irish Solidarity Movement (ISM) has continued its progress and December has seen a new ISC formed - in Leeds.

### FIRST NATIONAL DELEGATES MEETING

The first delegates meeting of the ISM was held in Manchester on 26 November. It was well attended with 45 delegates from ISCs in Edinburgh, Dundee, Liverpool, Bradford, Manchester, London (3), Southampton; University ISC Societies in Glasgow, Stirling and Edinburgh Troops Out Society; Leeds FRFI, Stoke Newington and Hackney Defence Campaign, Revolutionary Communist Group, Revolutionary Communist League.

Solidarity messages came from Mike Holden, (Connolly/Keegan Cumann Sinn Fein), East London Asian Collective, Annie Wakefield Break Out Collective and Graham Little a prisoner in HMP Gartree, who also sent £1 as his sponsorship fee for the conference. During the meeting Irish POW Gerry MacLochlainn, recently released from Maidstone prison brought greetings to the ISM and said, 'Thank you for all the work you are doing to bring to the British people the truth of British colonial rule in Ireland. A further message of solidarity came from Irish POW John McCluskey who had made a violin out of matchsticks especially for the ISM, which was displayed throughout the day.

The session on Irish POWs in English prisons emphasised that solidarity with the prisoners equals solidarity with the Irish struggle. A week of action was agreed for 12-18 March with demonstrations and prison pickets.

Next it was agreed to organise a week of action about the use of informers from 16-22 January. This will include court pickets, street activities and a protest petition circulated amongst lawyers.

### MANCHESTER MARTYRS COMMEMORATION

On 27 November 800 people marched to commemorate the Manchester Martyrs. Speakers included Jim McAllister of Sinn Fein and Gerry MacLochlainn, ex-POW. Solidarity messages included Irish Solidarity Movement, Irish Freedom Movement, Peoples Democratic Front. The ISM had a 150-strong contingent with committees from Scotland, London and the North West. Other organisations included Sinn Fein, Irish Freedom Movement, Leicester TOM, Nottingham ISC and Revolutionary

Communist Group. Two bands from Scotland led the march which was attacked and harassed by fascists.

### DAYS OF ACTION

Manchester ISC's weekend of action was very successful with a rally in the City Centre (despite police objections) and a 40-strong picket of Strangeways where POW's Tony Clarke and Paul Hill are incarcerated. The picket was supported by Nottingham ISG, FRFI and sympathetic individuals.



Manchester Martyrs Demonstration



Manchester ISC picket of Strangeways Prison

Edinburgh ISC held a Scottish Activists Conference the same weekend attended by Dundee ISC, Stirling and Glasgow University Irish Solidarity Societies, Edinburgh University Troops Out Society, Edinburgh LCI. There was discussion on the PTA, informers and prisoners and a call for a united action throughout Scotland on prisoners.

### HARASSMENT

Two MISC members were arrested whilst flyposting and held for some hours, being released after phone

For all information about ISM events and activities please write to ISM BM Box 1320, London WC1N 3XX

calls from councillors and others. They are to be summonsed. In Dundee students have tried to set up a University society but the Students Association have barred this on the grounds that it was an 'IRA front'. This disgraceful undemocratic behaviour needs protesting against. Write letters to the Executive Council, Students Representative Council, Students Association Building, Airlie Place, Dundee University.



### WEEKS OF ACTION

Activity has already begun against informers and a public meeting in London was addressed by Paddy O'Connor, barrister.

For the prisoners Week of Action plans are underway which include the production of a video. This will cost around £800 and this sum needs raising quickly. All donations welcome. The petition for the right of repatriation is gaining thousands of signatures, the latest to sign is Alf Lomas, Euro MP.

## IRA ATTACKS

Following a mortar attack on Carrickmore barracks, which killed one and injured 33 RUC men on 12 November, the IRA have continued to strike at will against political and military targets.

In 2 attacks Derry Brigade IRA hit the chiefs of the RUC task force responsible for recruiting paid perjurers in the city. On 15 November two IRA Active Service Units took up ambush positions near Strand Road RUC barracks. When Detective Inspector Derek Martindale drove out with his personal security escort of a RUC Landrover and patrol car one ASU opened fire with automatic rifles, seriously injuring him. His successor in the job, Detective Sergeant Ivor Semple, was wounded on 1 December when 3 IRA volunteers opened fire as he drove across Craigavon bridge in Derry.

Booby-trap car bombs killed UDR Major and Official Unionist councillor Charles Armstrong in Armagh on 14 November and wounded an UDR soldier near Portadown and an RUC man in Derry on 23 November.

In Belfast on 24 November 4 British soldiers and 2 RUC men were wounded by a 20 lb anti-personnel mine which was exploded by command wire as their mobile patrol passed Beechmount Leisure Centre on the Falls Road. On 28 November a mine injured 3 British soldiers at a roadblock on the New Lodge Road in North Belfast.

On 7 December an IRA volunteer executed Official Unionist Assemblyman Edgar Graham as he was approaching the Law Department of Queens University Belfast. Graham, who was armed with an RUC-supplied pistol, was his party's spokesman for security and had recently distinguished himself by applauding the informer strategy and the murder of 2 IRA volunteers by the SAS. As the IRA statement said: 'Let the Loyalist politicians, who make the ammunition for the British army, UDR and RUC to fire, understand that they cannot escape the repercussions of their incitement to murder and repression.'

Frank Coughlan

## DUBLIN BY-ELECTION

On Thursday 24 November Sinn Fein's candidate Christy Burke won 7% of the votes cast in a Dublin by-election, Dublin Central. Only 47% of the electorate bothered to vote. Irish Labour leader Dick Spring, described the result as 'frightening'. His candidate came last, and unlike last year this was a safe Labour area in a mainly working class constituency with a huge young population, and noted for its poverty and deprivation. Despite constant police harassment, slander from the press and other candidates, being banned from Irish television and radio (RTE) Burke doubled his percentage of the votes since he last contested the seat in 1981. A people's man, he got several families housed, helped drive out drug pushers from the Hardwicke Street flats, fought for better local amenities, gave much needed free legal advice to many, all in the last fifteen months.

In a state with the highest unemployment in the EEC, rising inflation, rising poverty, with a national debt worse than Poland's (per capita), and with the worst heroin epidemic in the West, the South is rapidly going down the same road that the Six Counties did in the late sixties. Working class voters are now clearly seeing the true nature of the South's 'independence' - its total dependence on Anglo-American capitalism, as monthly foreign factories make thousands redundant, having made their fat profits. People now know that there is a real alternative, Sinn Fein. Commenting on the by-election The Sunday Press (20/11/83) said that many youths are now identifying with their counterparts in Belfast. Sinn Fein's future looks very good.

Cathal

## Shoot to kill

On 28 November the RUC gunned down 77-year-old pensioner, Mrs Bridget Foster as she collected her pension at a Post Office in Pomeroy, Co Tyrone.

Two armed youths had raided the Post Office and were running out when the RUC opened fire wounding them and killing Mrs Foster. The RUC delayed 48 hours before admitting responsibility. They lyingly claimed that they were returning fire - a claim denied by eyewitnesses.

This murder marked an escalation of the shoot-to-kill policy whose aim is to placate the Loyalists. Shoot-to-kill claimed another 2 victims on 4 December when an SAS squad in Coalisland shot and killed two unarmed IRA volunteers. The two, Brian McGirr, had gone to examine an arms dump when suddenly, without warning, they were fired on. A third volunteer with them managed to escape but Brian and Colm were cut to pieces in a hail of bullets. Both victims were beaten after being shot, Brian having both his arms broken.

Alan James

## Labour imperialists

Labour Party leader Neil Kinnock is, as were his predecessors, thoroughly pro-imperialist on the Irish question. He is also a cowardly windbag. On his first visit to the Six Counties as Labour leader, Kinnock was asked the straight question: would he meet Sinn Fein? His response: Waffle about the precondition being that 'Sinn Fein were 'actively engaged in the democratic process'. Gerry Adams repeated calls to Kinnock were not returned. Kinnock went on to say that 'ultimately reunification was the only answer to the Irish question BUT he said:

'... ultimately can be a very long way away'.

Quite. Kinnock's ultimately also included the right of the loyalist minority to continue to veto reunification.

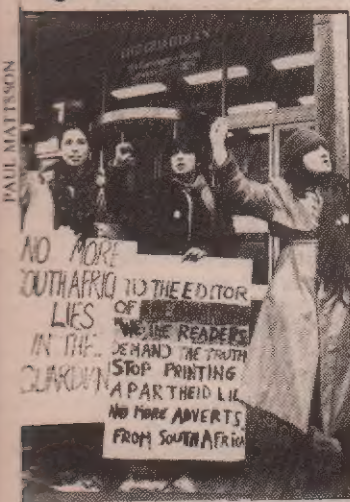
Labour's new spokesman on Ireland Peter Archer, is equally sickening. He was Solicitor General in Britain from 1974 to 1979 and therefore colluded in the conveyor belt system that led from forced confessions through the Diplock courts to the H-Blocks. Archer also recently said that he had no objection to the use of informers as long as evidence is 'reliable'. What a sick joke for the hundreds facing prison as a result of paid perjurers.

Labour's imperialist tradition is in safe hands with these two.

MW



# Round-up



## ● Editor can't you see? The Guardian is full of hypocrisy

On 15 December City of London Anti-Apartheid Group held a 30-strong picket of the 'Guardian' in London as FRFI picketed their offices in Manchester in protest at a series of racist advertisements issued by the South African Embassy. Edinburgh FRFI are planning a picket of the 'Scotsman' which has been publishing the same adverts.

A special leaflet was distributed. On one side was reprinted an advert claiming that South African people could buy 4-bedroomed houses for £600 – across this was written 'APARTHEID LIES'. On the other side was printed the truth. A photograph of black people by the shacks they have to live in. A description of the bantustans which South Africa claims to be another country! The fact that whilst the South African regime can afford thousands of pounds to pay for their vile propaganda, black South Africans could not possibly buy such advertising. When City AA placed a 5cm advert (1 column) in the 'Guardian' it cost us £110. The racist adverts are 34cm deep (5 columns) – how much do they pay?

Their adverts are bought with the blood of black people in their attempt to counter the growing opposition to apartheid. The UDF and the ANC are growing in strength and stature in South Africa and internationally. We are having repeated success in this country. Their adverts are their fear of their downfall. We must stop their lies.

Copies of a petition launched by City AA calling on the editor of the 'Guardian' to cease accepting such vile propaganda are available from BM City AA, London, WC1N 3XX.



PAUL MATTSSON

## Victory for Trafalgar 9

7 of the 9 youth arrested outside South Africa House, Trafalgar Square, on 8 June whilst peacefully demonstrating against the impending hanging of 3 ANC freedom fighters, have been acquitted of all charges brought against them. This is a tremendous victory in our struggle to defend basic democratic rights, which are being continuously eroded and taken away. The Trafalgar 9 Defence Campaign in the last six months has succeeded in winning a broad spectrum of support in defence of our right to demonstrate outside South Africa House – MPs, councillors, trade unions, trade councils, students and many, many others.

Our right to demonstrate was challenged from the outset when the prosecution opened the case

by stating that people in this country, 'have no right as such to demonstrate'. Moreover, that the nine arrests were necessary since the police have a duty to 'preserve the peace and dignity' of the South African embassy. Such is the true face of British democracy – youth who stand in total solidarity with the oppressed in Southern Africa, fighting for freedom and democracy, face increasing attack and arrest from the British state, who will always defend the barbaric apartheid system and their British imperialist interests.

After 3 days of gross police lies, well exposed by defence barristers James Wood and David Bean, the magistrate threw out the prosecution charges against 5 of the defendants. A sixth defendant,

only 15 years old, had the charges against him withdrawn and he was bound over to the sum of £75 to keep the peace for 18 months. After a further two days, the magistrate was forced to acquit Steve and Amanda Kitson, whose father is a South African political prisoner, due to 'gaping inconsistencies in police evidence.' Having done this, he then tried to bind them over to keep the peace. However when Steve and Amanda refused he backed down saying that he would not be responsible for sending the Kitsons to gaol. Andy however, was convicted of obstruction of the highway, for selling FRFI, and was fined £20.

The police, having written their notes together, continually gave conflicting evidence, and went to ridiculous limits to prove the cases brought against us. A 5ft tall woman defendant, according to PC Jones, jumped onto the back of PC Berganski – 6ft 4" and 16 stone! And her feet didn't even touch the ground! Inspector Goldsmith of Woolwich police insisted that he had not accompanied Steve Kitson to the police carrier and went beetroot when shown a photograph of himself at the back of the police carrier!

In the past year, the police have stepped up their harassment of pickets held outside South Africa House, in an attempt to drive us away altogether. We refuse to cower to the bullying tactics of the apartheid-loving police. We thank all our supporters for joining our struggle to defend the democratic right to demonstrate outside South Africa House, and urge you to join us in maintaining strong, militant pickets of South Africa House.

WE HAVE FOUGHT!  
WE HAVE WON!  
THE STRUGGLE HERE HAS JUST BEGUN!  
Ruby and Sarah W

## ● Manchester Irish Solidarity Committee Weekend of Action

On 10 and 11 December Manchester ISC organised a weekend of action on Ireland, the highlight of which was a picket of Strangeways Prison where Paul Hill and Tony Clarke are at present incarcerated.

On Saturday morning a Rally took place in the face of objections from both the Labour controlled City Council and the Police. The 40-strong picket was supported by members of Liverpool and Bradford ISCs, Leeds Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism supporters, Nottingham Irish Solidarity Group, Women and Ireland and other individuals. When visiting time finished the picket marched to D-Wing where Paul Hill and Tony Clarke are being isolated in the Punishment Block. After some minutes chanting slogans a response came from E-Wing; prisoners shouting encouragement to the picket, giving vent to their hatred of the brutal prison system. The picket then moved on to C-Wing where again the prisoners shouted back to us asking who are Paul Hill and Tony Clarke – the picket soon let them know!

Robert Barry

## ● Irish Solidarity in Colleges

Irish solidarity work amongst students continues to grow. At Glasgow University the Irish Solidarity Society held a successful showing of the film 'Prisoner of War'. At Stirling University over 30 people attended the Irish Solidarity Society's first meeting; this was followed up with a meeting on the informer strategy, bookstalls on the campus and petitioning. A new Irish Solidarity Society has recently been formed at Bradford College, and Edinburgh University Troops Out Society has had a number of successful meetings, including a showing of 'The Patriot Game'.

Colin C

## ● Manchester Solidarity with Grenada

On Thursday 17 November FRFI held a public meeting in Manchester Town Hall which called for American Troops Out of Grenada. Speakers from NICA (No Intervention in Central America), local FRFI and from the Manchester Irish Solidarity Committee in turn condemned the crimes of imperialism against the people and expressed their solidarity with the Grenadian people's struggle.

## THE INFORMERS-SMASH THE SHOW TRIALS!

Week of action against the use of  
informers, 16-22 January

### ● BRADFORD IRISH SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

Street Meeting Smash the Supergrass System – Informers Against the People! Wednesday 18 January 12.45-2pm outside Provincial House Bradford City Centre

### ● LONDON IRISH SOLIDARITY COMMITTEES

Court Picket No More Paid Perjurors in Ireland! Monday 16 January Old Bailey, EC4, 12.2pm (nearest tube: Chancery Lane). Public Meeting No to Informers! Wednesday 18 January Conway Hall, Red Lion Square London WC1, 7.30pm (nearest tube: Holborn). Street Meeting/Display/Petitioning Thursday 19 January, Kilburn Sq, NW6, 6pm (nearest tube: Kilburn Park). Street Meeting and Display Saturday 21 January, Tooting Broadway, 12-2pm

### ● MANCHESTER IRISH SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

Picket of Crown Court The Informers – Smash the Show Trials Monday 16 January Crown Square, Manchester, 9am-12 noon Public Meeting The Informers – Smash the Show Trials Thursday 19 January Longsight Library, Longsight, Manchester 7.30pm. Street Meeting The Informers – Smash the Show Trials! Friday 20 January The Asda, Longsight, Stanley Grove entrance 5-7pm. Rally Smash the Show Trials! Saturday 21 January Piccadilly 11am AND 2.30 Picket Strangeways Prison

### ● EDINBURGH IRISH SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

Public Meeting Stop the Show Trials! No to Informers! Tuesday 17 January 7pm. Details of this and other events during Week of Action from EISC, Box 110, 43 Candlemaker Row. Picket of High Court Saturday 21 January 11am High Court, Parliament Square, High St, Edinburgh

### ● DUNDEE IRISH SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

Public Meeting Smash the Informer System! No More Show Trials! Wednesday 18 January 7.30pm Dundee Trades Council Club, Rattray Street, Dundee

### ● LEEDS IRISH SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

Picket of Leeds Magistrates Court Stop the Show Trials! End the Informers System in Ireland! Monday 16 January, 9.30am-12.30pm Leeds Magistrates Court (Town Hall Steps)

### ● CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

North and South London FRFI wish to thank all who helped to make our Christmas Bazaar such a success through their hard labour and wonderful items contributed. We are happy to announce that we raised £282.50 and without such generous support this would not have been possible!

## EVENTS

### 24 – 30 DEC

#### MANCHESTER

Mass picket Free Nelson Mandela! Free All South African Political Prisoners! Saturday 24 December – Christmas Eve. Market Street Manchester 9am-6pm. Called by Manchester FRFI

#### WEST LONDON

Prison Picket. Support Irish POWs Saturday 24 December – Christmas Eve. Wormwood Scrubs, Du Cane Road, W12, 2pm (nearest tube: East Acton). Called by Sinn Fein (Britain)

#### SOUTH LONDON

Street Meeting Support Irish POWs in English Jails Saturday 24 December – Christmas Eve. The Prince of Wales (nearest tube: Brixton) 10am-12 noon. Called by South London Irish Solidarity Committee

### 7 – 13 JAN

#### LEEDS

Street Meeting Victory to the Irish People! Troops Out Now! Saturday 7 January, 10.30am-12.30pm Dortmund Square, Leeds. Called by Leeds Irish Solidarity Committee

#### SOUTH LONDON

Street Meeting Smash the Show Trials – No to Informers! Saturday 7 January, 1.45pm. Clapham Junction British Rail. Called by South London Irish Solidarity Committee

### 14 – 20 JAN

#### SOUTH LONDON

Street Meeting Smash the Show Trials – No to Informers! Saturday 14 January 1.45pm Balham tube. Called by South London Irish Solidarity Committee

#### EDINBURGH

Public Meeting Smash Apartheid! End British Collaboration Now! Workers and Oppressed Peoples of the World – Unite! Monday 16 January 7pm. Drummond High School, Edinburgh. Called by Edinburgh FRFI

### 21 – 27 JAN

#### EDINBURGH

Day school: The Revolutionary Road to Communism in Britain: Build the Anti-Imperialist Movement! Speakers from FRFI and Scottish RCG. Sunday 22 January 10.30am-5pm. Edinburgh Trades Council, Picardy Place, Edinburgh. £1.50 waged, 70p unwaged. Called by Scottish RCG. More details: Box 40, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh

#### LONDON

March and Rally Kill the Police Bill Saturday 21 January. Assemble Brockwell Park (Brixton) 12 noon. March to Trafalgar Square. Called by National Campaign against the Police Bill.

### COMING SOON

#### GLASGOW

Public Forum Ireland – Key to the British Revolution Last Tuesday of every month, 7pm, beginning Tuesday 31 January. Details from FRFI sellers or BCM Box 5909, London WC1N 3XX. Called by FRFI

#### NORTH LONDON

FRFI Public Forum British Justice – No Justice! Wednesday 1 February 7.30pm Hackney Labour Club, 96 Dalston Lane, London E8. Called by North London FRFI

#### BRADFORD

Anti-Apartheid Group Activists Meeting meet fortnightly. For details of meetings and activities contact Bradford AA Group c/o The Starry Plough Bookshop, 5 Edmund Street, Bradford

#### FRFI SUPPORTER GROUPS

FRFI supporters are active in local campaigns, Irish Solidarity Committees, anti-racist campaigns and other political struggles in DUNDEE, EDINBURGH, GLASGOW, LIVERPOOL, MANCHESTER, LEEDS, BRADFORD, BRISTOL AND LONDON. If you wish to join us in our activities, help us sell FRFI and help build an anti-imperialist movement, contact your local seller or write to FRFI, BCM Box 5909, London WC1N 3XX

## FRFI SUPPORTER GROUPS

#### EDINBURGH

Meets fortnightly – for all FRFI supporters. Discussion, Planning Activities and Fund-Raising. Alternate Mondays. Details from Box 40, First of May Bookshop, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh, or from FRFI sellers

#### LEEDS

FRFI Supporters Groups meet every second Thursday at Leeds Trades Club, Saville Mount, Leeds 7, 7.30pm. Further details from FRFI, c/o LAP, 59 Cookridge Street, Leeds 2

#### SOUTH EAST LONDON

Next meeting on Tuesday 10 January: Discussion on Marx and Lenin. 7pm Room 3, Albany Community Centre, Douglas Way, SE8 (near New Cross Tube, BR)

#### BRADFORD

Next meeting Thursday 12 January, Queens Hall, Morley Street 7.30-9.15pm

#### STOKE NEWINGTON

For details contact your FRFI seller

#### CENTRAL LONDON

Next meeting: Sunday 8 January: 'Resistance in South Africa – The Ciskei and the UDF'. Contact FRFI sellers for details

#### BRADFORD

For details write to FRFI, c/o The Starry Plough Bookshop, 6 Edmond St, Bradford 5

## IRISH SOLIDARITY COMMITTEES

#### MANCHESTER

Irish Solidarity Committee. Details and information on activities can be obtained from MISC, Box 47, 164-166 Corn Exchange, Hanging Ditch, Manchester M3 4BN.

#### EAST LONDON

Irish Solidarity Committee meets fortnightly. For information and details write to ELISC, BM 1320 London WC1N 3XX

#### WEST LONDON

Irish Solidarity Committee. For more information about the work of the committee write to WLISC, BM Box 1320, London WC1N 3XX

#### EDINBURGH

Irish Solidarity Committee. Meets every week – organising meetings, filmshows, street campaigning, discussion and education. Contact EISC c/o Box 110, First of May Bookshop, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh

#### LIVERPOOL

Irish Solidarity Committee meets fortnightly. For details write to LISC, PO Box 94 Liverpool L69 8AY

#### SOUTHAMPTON

Irish Solidarity Committee. For more information contact ISM, BM Box 1320 London WC1N 3XX

#### LEEDS

Irish Solidarity Committee meets on Tuesdays 17 January and 31 January at Chapelton Community Centre, Reginald Terrace, Leeds 7 at 7.30pm



# letters

Please note our address is, FRFI BCM Box 5909, London WC1N 3XX. SEND US YOUR LETTERS. We welcome letters from readers but please keep them as short as you can.

## Nineteenth century right

Dear Editor,  
We are never short of members of the public congratulating others on the establishing of a civil right through the courts of this country. Today I would like to congratulate the members of another society, another era, those who live and often die under the degrading conditions of the 'human dustbins' of the Victorian era.

Recently the prison's population established a nineteenth century civil right through the Divisional Court. It is simply the right of a prisoner to be considered for legal representation when charged with serious infractions of prison discipline before the prison Board of Visitors. That right had always been there since the birth of the Boards of Visitors in the late nineteenth century, but the Bureaucrats felt that it would be better buried beneath the dust of the Home Office archives. Hundreds of prisoners endured years of sacrifice and suffering to uncover it and today they take a small, but significant, step into the twentieth century.

Slowly the wall of silence and shroud of secrecy are crumbling around us. They may hold in subjugation 44,000 working class people but those people will not be silenced. Harsher sentencing and the erosion of civil liberties will not deter those who cry out against injustices. Like the Home Office archives the ruling clique hold on but the 'river of feeling' which I see flowing, will not be stifled by oppression nor secret Acts.

Comrades, I salute you on this significant victory in our struggle for justice. Yet, it is but a small land-mark on a very long journey.

Irish political prisoner  
HM Prison Long Lartin

## The Real Criminals

Dear FRFI,  
When a spokesman for British Nuclear Fuels Ltd (a state company) was asked to comment on a tenfold increase in deaths of school children from a rare blood disease (leukaemia) he said that this was only a statistical

increase (to the crazed capitalist only profit is real).

Such a cynical contempt for people's suffering only points to the reason why since 1952 over ¼ ton of plutonium has been discharged into the Irish Sea (1 milligram is considered a fatal dose). Strontium 90 has been found in cows milk from the area (1,000 times higher than the acceptable safe level, itself set much too high), rivers have been poisoned, gases have been released to the atmosphere, all this and more have produced the 'statistical death and disease' from the west of Ireland to the east of Britain and in fact anywhere wind and water currents carry the poison. Closure of the beach along the Cumbrian coast because of a massive radioactive slick shows the true extent of the disaster. And the government's solution? 'We'll change the name to Sellafeld.' That will confuse them! Reminds one of the time the people rioted against the corrupt system in Moss Side and all the state offered was a new name (the Alexandra centre) and a station therein to house a brigade of bootboys in uniform.

The legal assault on Greenpeace for its attempt to stop the poison flowing into the sea, with the courts dishing out a £50,000 fine, on the same day that the courts were busy punishing the workers for picketing in Warrington, all points to one question: How long before these criminals are brought to book? Yours in solidarity  
**BM**  
Manchester

## White Racism

Dear FRFI,  
On Wednesday 14 December I was walking with one of my friends. As we came around a corner in the school some of our Asian friends were telling us that there had just been a fight. Then they disappeared. Me and my friend opened the door to step outside during break time in the afternoon.

All of a sudden there were about twenty white kids from Little Ilford School and they were coming in the school through their doors. One kid, his name was Tony Labour, was very angry and for no reason whatsoever

punched me near the right eye and then kicked me... I went with some of my friends to the office. I was told by one of the teachers that there was nothing wrong with my eye and I was ignored... If any of the white people would get marks on their faces like mine then I am fully sure that the Asians would be in more serious trouble than when Asians get injured. The reason why I go on a Newham 8 picket is because I know that you don't get no protection from the police who I think should be on trial and not the Newham 8. What is happening to the Newham 8 is happening to Asians all the time everywhere. I think it is good the Newham 8 is organised because we need to defend ourselves from fascist attacks and any other attacks.

White people think it is only their rights to do what they like in this country because it's their country but how would they feel if they were in a foreign country and the foreigners attacked them all the time. I think it is very good organisation of the Newham 8 because if we don't get together then there would be more attacks. The Newham 8 is innocent! Self-defence is NO offence! It's police brutality, It's police conspiracy, The police are to be blamed! **Shahzad Hussein**  
East Ham

## Letter from Glasgow Sinn Fein

Dear FRFI,  
I would like to clarify certain points contained in FRFI issue number 33.

(1) That no member of Glasgow Sinn Fein addressed the October 1st Rally. In fact there were no members of Glasgow Sinn Fein in London that weekend.

(2) On page 9 of that issue there was a photograph of an unknown person with a caption below stating 'Glasgow Sinn Fein comrade'.

This person is definitely *not* a member of Glasgow Sinn Fein and never has been a member. Maybe this person would like to write to us at the address below explaining how he can claim to be a member of Glasgow Sinn Fein if no one here has ever seen him before.

**Tony O'Mara**  
Francis Hughes Sinn Fein Cumann, Box 6, 488 Great Western Road, Glasgow

A comrade from the ISM replies: FRFI has passed your letter to the ISM for reply since it was an ISM demonstration that was reported on. The person referred to represented himself as a member of Glasgow Sinn Fein and we accepted this in good faith. It is not for us to question people who appear genuine and sincere. We will be pleased, on our next demonstration, to welcome a speaker from your cumann or any other in Glasgow.

## Gunboat Reagan's 'difficult decision'

Dear members  
I would like to respond to your letter about developments in Grenada. President Reagan has made it clear that it was a difficult decision for all concerned governments, but it was considered essential to protect innocent people, including up to 1,000 Americans and to forestall further chaos.

Moreover, let me draw your attention to the reaffirmation by the White House press secretary on October 31, that our 'major objective is to work with Governor General Sir Paul Scoon to establish the interim Government that will lead to the election, and to discuss his ideas for a peacekeeping force that will allow US forces to leave as soon as possible'.  
Yours sincerely,  
**P A Arnold**  
Counselor for Public Affairs  
United States Information Service,  
Embassy of the United States of America  
55/56 Upper Brook Street  
London W1A 2LH

## Reply to imperialist counselor

The 1000 Americans were proven to have been in no danger (see FRFI 34); as regards chaos, the US troops encouraged and then stood by and watched looting to destroy the fruits of the revolution. US armaments destroyed electrical, telephone and other vital services, as well as a mental hospital; US marines have reintroduced prostitution and heroin - not seen in Grenada since the 1979 revolution.

As for Scoon, the imperialists have no intention of leaving Grenada to the Grenadian people. They have killed and jailed hundreds of Grenadians which the revolution never did. The US record throughout the Caribbean confirms what Grenadian revolutionaries know to be true - that the US will only leave Grenada if they are forced out.

## Holy British 'Left'

Dear comrades  
Warmest fraternal greetings! I have just read your November-December issue of Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! and found your article on Grenada informative and factual. You see, Comrades, I am a Grenadian national and a member of the NJM Support Group (UK) and even from this great distance I am close to the parent organisation at home.

Under your sub heading 'Holy British left I fully endorse everything you wrote. I particularly remember running into the Next Step - and after looking at the front page commented, 'Should be a running jump'. When I asked the young woman where she got her information from she said brightly 'We have contacts in Central America'. I then pointed out to her that Grenada is in fact not within swimming distance of Central America and that we the NJM Support Group are based in London and can provide information that is factual. She then proceeded to lecture me on NJM as though we were finished and that is not the case. After a few more exchanges I resorted to something I hate doing, my language became a bit strong - not printable. My only hope is that everyone who bought that rag - I think they were robbed - also bought a copy of your paper.

Finally, Comrades, I think your paper is too good to make the same spelling mistakes as the bourgeois press or the 'super revolutionaries' rags. Grenadian is spelt GRENADIAN. Fraternally  
**Gerald M Calliste**  
N London

## 'Militant' Socialists?

Comrades,  
I would like to tell you about an incident that happened in an area of Bradford called 'Broadway'. The Bradford Branch of the Anti-Apartheid Group were having a petition for an apartheid free zone. I was signing the petition when a bloke approached us - and asked me if I would like to buy one of his papers. I said no thanks but what about you signing the petition. (By the way his paper was called 'Militant'). He replied by using a string of abuse and obscenities. He finished up by saying that the ANC, PLO and the IRA were all terrorist organisations and went around killing innocent people. I thought that 'Militant' were supposed to be socialists and supported freedom fighters. I leave you to draw your own conclusions. I hope you print this letter. It could act as a warning against the so-called socialists of the Militant.  
**Jacky**  
Bradford

## Imperialist Hypocrisy

Dear Editor  
Your recent articles on the shooting down of the South Korean air liner (FRFI 32 & 33) with the tragic and very sad loss of life of all those on board, was most revealing. However, you did not mention that Britain in 1917 manipulated the sinking of the Lusitania (a US passenger ship) off the south west coast of Ireland, so allowing America to enter the First World War. To this day the admiralty refuses to release certain papers relating to that event. Sixty-five years later! Germany always claimed that the ship was carrying arms and ammunition for Britain's war effort, so it was a legitimate target. Britain was to blame for the loss of several hundred who drowned. Few say, or have said anything condemning the brutal act.

In 1973, Israel shot down a Libyan airliner killing all those on board. Neither Britain nor America screamed hysterically for a boycott of all things Israeli, but continued to support them in their genocide against the Palestinians. Again in 1978 when a Cuban airliner was blown up in the Caribbean, killing all on board, we heard no cries to hang those responsible - anti Castro Cubans, living in America, and with the full support of the CIA. And of course we had the sinking of the General Belgrano in the 1982 Falklands/Malvinas War. A forty-six year old battleship

outside the exclusion zone, by the humane civilised Brits. Few papers protested.

The British establishment, as a Palestinian recently told me, has no morals. It lusts after power and wealth, trampling all before it, in its pursuit.

**SM**  
London

## Money for Thuggery

Dear FRFI,  
Recently I had the horrible experience of having to sit for two hours in a prison waiting room with two prison officers. Most of the time I ignored their conversation which was mainly unintelligible. I did at one point, however, hear them discussing finances. One started talking about insurance policies, mortgages, tax relief and a colleague of his who had just spent £60,000 on buying a new house with double glazing and central heating. The other P.O. then went into detail of a £52,000 house that he could have afforded. He said it was a bungalow in 2 acres of land, set back from the road with a double drive, double garage (big enough for 4 cars), patio with barbecue in the back, swimming pool, extension, 4 bedrooms, 'a great big lounge, all properly done, not a bloody shack'. It didn't sound like it. He went on to say that he would be struggling on his £180-£190 basic if it wasn't for his overtime boosting him up to an average weekly take home of £240-£250. As he said, 'I survive very comfortably, buying what I want, when I want.' I bet he does.

During this conversation I saw some visitors leaving the prison. A family, the woman and girl crying, the man looking miserable and a young woman crying loudly who shouted 'and only one letter a week!' The British state pays hundreds of pounds a week to thugs who beat, brutalise and oppress prisoners whilst allowing millions of working class people to live in poverty and thousands of families to be homeless. At the time, I couldn't help thinking of the last verse of a song,

'Those uniformed sadists,  
those boot-boys in blue,  
Their wages are paid for by me  
and by you;  
But one day the screws will all  
be unemployed.  
On the day when the prisons  
are knocked down and  
destroyed.'

VICTORY TO THE PRISONERS!  
VICTORY TO THE PRISONERS' FAMILIES!  
**Melanie Griffiths**  
East London

# FUND DRIVE

## NOVEMBER/DECEMBER: £644.58

This tremendous result brings the 1983 Fund to £5,471.25. With December not quite over yet, this means we will get very near our £6,000 target for the year. Please send us donations over the holidays to get us closer to that aim.

London FRFI supporters worked hard at their Christmas Bazaar which raised £282.50 of the overall London total of £451.49! The FRFI supporter groups in the rest of the country raised in Edinburgh £70.75, Manchester £39.50, Dundee £21.07, Liverpool £20.37, Leeds £19.25, Bradford £17.65. Individual supporters sent in £4.50.

Let's keep this up, because FRFI aims to involve more people in building an anti-imperialist movement. It can succeed only if its message reaches those who stand up for their rights and want to join the organised fightback against injustice and oppression. It can succeed only with your help. Act now by subsidising FRFI! Send us your donation or hand it in to your FRFI seller. Organise fundraising events - jumble sales, socials, collections.

We will publish all contributions in this column. If you want your name or your organisation mentioned alongside the donation please say so.

Make your donation payable to 'Larkin Publications' and return to: FRFI BCM Box 5909, London WC1N 3XX

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# HANDS OFF IRELAND

In a massive escalation of judicial terror against the nationalist people of the Six Counties, the use of informers has become a major weapon in the British state's war against the Irish people. The use of informers is not new. What is new is the scale of this current operation, a strategy consciously introduced. Frank Kitson, now General in Chief of UK Land Forces, wrote:

'The law should be used as just another weapon in the government arsenal and in this case become little more than a propaganda cover for the disposal of unwanted members of the public. The activities of the legal services have to be tied into the war effort in as discreet a way as possible.'

The use of informers is the latest measure designed by the British to cow and demoralise the people's resistance. Internment was followed by loss of political status, then torture in Castelreagh and recently shoot-to-kill. The new strategy exposes the sham of British 'justice', and allows the maximum number of arrests on the minimum possible evidence and a return to interment — judicially.

## Smash the show trials!

A member of Relatives for Justice, whose husband is awaiting trial on an informer's evidence, said in a statement to a press conference in the House of Commons:

'You have taken away the right to trial by jury, newspapers have stolen our right to be innocent until proven guilty, are you now taking away guilt beyond reasonable doubt, and is there no longer to be even a pretence that 'justice will be seen to be done'? Will you then continue to tell us to respect law and order — your law and order?'

The RUC use intimidation, bribery, blackmail, immunity from prosecution to force people to turn informer. Families are kidnapped by the RUC to put pressure on informers. The trials and court appearances are farces. Mass trials take place where unconnected people, and unconnected offences are tried together. Guilt by association and implication is the name of the game. Relatives and friends going into the public gallery are searched, names and addresses are taken, checked, then marked under the defendant's name. The Gilmour family was thrown out of court when his mother tried to speak to him. The wife of a defendant has been barred from court for smiling at her husband. The courts are swamped with prison officers, armed police and Special Branch. Lord Justice Gibson said informer John Grimley's evidence was 'half-truth' and 'lie' but convicted 11 people on it, giving them sentences totalling 51 years.

In the non-jury Diplock courts men are charged with such offences as 'possession of an unknown gun in an unknown place at an unknown time on the

sole word of an informer.

Cracks in the strategy have begun to appear. There have been 11 retractions of false statements. On 14 November William Skelly retracted his 'evidence' and charges against 10 Belfast men were dropped. In the Six Counties there has been the emergence of campaigns against the informer strategy, with pickets of courts, leafleting, speaking tours and street campaigning. On 3 November 40 barristers and solicitors from across the Six Counties condemned the informer trials; Lord Gifford told lawyers that there is:

'growing alarm in British legal circles

at the continuing erosion of civil liberties here.'

Informers themselves, unsure about the terms of their deals with the RUC, are threatening a strike by retracting their evidence. So far the RUC have been unable to give written undertakings to them.

Despite the cracks, the pressure has to be stepped up. The RUC succeeded in imprisoning Jim Gibney, former National Organiser of Sinn Fein for 12 years: they are still attempting to pick off prominent republicans such as Gerry Adams, Danny Morrison and

Martin McGuinness. With the informers giving evidence against family, friends and comrades, the British state is hoping to cause division, demoralisation and fear within the nationalist community and the Republican Movement. Attorney General Havers defended the use of informers against those 'who cannot otherwise be charged'. Over 350 people still await trial, and 26 informers wait to give their false evidence. The vast sums spent on this strategy show its importance: £8.4m per year to keep the defendants in gaol; up to £300,000 is offered to informers; the Christopher Black trial cost £1m.

This latest assault on the Irish people's resistance to British rule must be fought against. In an open letter from Jimmy Brown, on remand in Crumlin Road Prison on the evidence of informer Harry Kirkpatrick, he said:

'As one who makes no secret of my opposition to English interference in Irish affairs, I believe that one nation that enslaves another can never itself be free. For those of you in England that are concerned about what goes on in your name in Ireland, this is an issue you cannot ignore. To do this is to turn your back and say you cannot see.'

The nationalist people and the Republican Movement are fighting the latest form of imperialist attack. Communists, anti-imperialists and democrats in Britain must raise their voices in condemnation of the unjust, corrupt, vicious and sordid use of paid perjurers. We cannot turn our backs. Support the Irish Solidarity Movement's week of action protesting against informers.

Pauline Sellars



Picket of Crumlin Road Court House against Kevin McGrady show trial

## Sectarian attacks and murders

continued from page 1

maintain supremacy in the North, not the weapon of those who justifiably fight to free their people from foreign oppression.'

The IRA condemned the shootings. The Republican movement has consistently rejected the use of sectarian attacks against ordinary Protestant people and directed its struggle against British imperialism and its Loyalist institutions in the Six Counties.

The Mountain Lodge shootings followed a spate of sectarian attacks by Loyalist paramilitaries in Armagh. On 8 November Adrian Carroll was shot dead in Armagh. His murder was claimed by the Protestant Action Force, a pseudonym for the Ulster Volunteer Force, which has close connections with the RUC and UDR. The UVF has, over the past 14 years, carried out vicious sectarian killings such as those committed by the notorious Shankill Butchers. Adrian Carroll, as was well known in Armagh, had been repeatedly stopped and threatened by the UDR in the days prior to his murder. It was because this threatened to become public knowledge that the RUC was forced to arrest 7 UDR men in connection with his murder and 5 others are presently being questioned. The UDR is 97% Protestant and is notorious for its sectarian role, having merely replaced the hated B-Specials.

Since the Mountain Lodge shootings, Loyalist sectarian attacks have escalated. But there were no front page headlines when 51 year old Catholic Daniel Rouse was beaten to death in County Armagh. On 5 December the Protestant Action Force struck again when 25 year old Joseph Craven was shot dead whilst walking with his two brothers to sign on. Their father was also murdered in 1976. Craven's funeral, at which he was to be given military honours by INLA was itself attacked by the RUC. On 12 December 18 year old Jude Anthony Dawson was shot dead in East Belfast, a few dozen yards from a police station. An RUC officer has been arrested in connection with this murder.

Loyalist attacks traditionally rise when the Republican movement's successes multiply. The British state and Loyalists then feel that official repression is not adequate and back it up with sectarian violence aimed at striking terror into the nationalist people. The Loyalists who commit these attacks are often supplied with information on their victims by the police force or UDR or, as in Armagh, the latter merely take off their uniforms and do the killings themselves. They are rarely caught or prosecuted unless they become too blatant or a few token arrests to suit British government propaganda purposes.

Contrast this with the British state's response to the Mountain Lodge killings. 240 extra soldiers were put into Armagh within two days and SAS activity stepped up. On 4 December three unarmed IRA volunteers were ambushed and two of them shot dead by the SAS in Coalisland, County Tyrone.

Knowing that they could not pin the Mountain Lodge shootings on the IRA the British press tried to blame their favourite bogey-man Dominic McGlinchey. He has since specifically denied involvement and condemned the shootings. Nevertheless Mountain Lodge is being used as a pretext for even greater repression against the Republican movement. That repression will, as always, meet the determined resistance of the Irish people.

Maxine Williams

### SMASH THE SHOW TRIALS Week of action against the use of informers, 16-22 January

#### LONDON IRISH SOLIDARITY COMMITTEES

Court Picket No More Paid Perjurers in Ireland! Monday 16 January Old Bailey, EC4, 12-2pm (nearest tube: Chancery Lane). Public Meeting No to Informers! Wednesday 18 January Conway Hall, Red Lion Square London WC1, 7.30pm (nearest tube: Holborn). Street Meeting/Display/Petitioning Thursday 19 January, Kilburn Sq, NW6, 6pm (nearest tube: Kilburn Park). Street Meeting and Display Saturday 21 January, Tooting Broadway, 12-2pm

#### MANCHESTER IRISH SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

Picket of Crown Court The Informers — Smash the Show Trials Monday 16 January Crown Square, Manchester, 9am-12 noon Public Meeting The Informers — Smash the Show Trials Thursday 19 January Longsight Library, Longsight, Manchester 7.30pm. Street Meeting The Informers — Smash the Show Trials! Friday 20 January The Asda, Longsight, Stanley Grove entrance 5-7pm. Rally Smash the Show Trials! Saturday 21 January Piccadilly 11am AND 2.30pm picket Strangeways Prison

#### BRADFORD IRISH SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

Street Meeting Smash the Supergrass System — Informers Against the People! Wednesday 18 January 12.45-2pm outside Provincial House Bradford City Centre

#### DUNDEE IRISH SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

Public Meeting Smash the Informer System! No More Show Trials! Wednesday 18 January 7.30pm Dundee Trades Council Club, Rattray Street, Dundee

#### EDINBURGH IRISH SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

Public Meeting Stop the Show Trials! No to Informers! Tuesday 17 January 7pm. Details of this and other events during Week of Action from EISC, Box 110, 43 Candlemaker Row. Picket of High Court Saturday 21 January 11am High Court, Parliament Square, High St, Edinburgh

#### LEEDS IRISH SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

Picket of Leeds Magistrates Court Stop the Show Trials! End the Informers System in Ireland! Monday 16 January, 9.30am-12.30pm Leeds Magistrates Court (Town Hall Steps)

## The Tidey kidnapping

On 24 November the IRA kidnapped Don Tidey vice-chairman of the Quinnsworth supermarket chain. Tidey's bosses, the Weston family, have a personal fortune of £1.6 billion, while the London-based parent company Associated British Foods made £115 million in 1982 from subsidiaries such as Fine Fare in Britain and South African Milling. Had the kidnapping been successful £5 million of this vast profit — extracted from the oppressed masses in Ireland, South Africa and elsewhere — would have gone to the IRA.

On Friday 16 December 2,500 Free State troops and Gardaí descended on Ballinamore Co Leitrim and freed Tidey. Despite this display of force the IRA volunteers escaped and, whilst defending themselves, killed a soldier and a Garda. The trigger happy Free State forces shot an uninvolved motorist in the head. Lying statements were issued claiming that two volunteers had been captured. By Saturday these statements had been withdrawn. Local Republicans, including veteran John Joe McGirl, have,

however, been rounded up.

The IRA statement on the kidnapping denounces Free State 'trigger-happiness'. This 'trigger happiness' only confirms that any development of the Republican struggle in the 26 Counties will meet Free State repression as fierce as British imperialist repression in the Six Counties. Garrett FitzGerald is now openly threatening the banning of Sinn Fein.

Terry Marlowe

## The arrest of Tommy Quigley

Tommy Quigley is the latest Irishman in Britain to be charged with 'conspiracy to cause explosions'. Arrested in Belfast on Friday 2 December, he was secretly flown by the RAF to London. Held at Paddington Green police station (purpose-built, like a fortress, for Irish political prisoners). He was held and interrogated under the infamous Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) for five and a half days, before being charged on Thursday 8 December amid the usual hysterical 'security' with masses of armed police ringing the court, dogs, searches, etc.

In the present atmosphere of anti-Irish hysteria he stands no chance of a fair trial — not that Irish political prisoners ever get one.

During Quigley's detention at Paddington Green the Irish Freedom Movement/Revolutionary Communist Party called a series of pickets to highlight the true terror nature of the PTA, and to demand his release. The militant pickets were well attended with an average of thirty people, representing Sinn Fein, IFM, the South London Irish Solidarity

Committee, the Irish in Britain Representation Group and Brent East Labour Party.

On Tuesday 6 December about thirty NF and fascist thugs turned up for a counter picket, but eventually left, while the anti-PTA picket stayed on, more determined and more vocal. All readers are urged to write to Home Secretary Leon Brittan and demand Tommy Quigley's immediate release.

Cathal